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TO A FRIEND ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

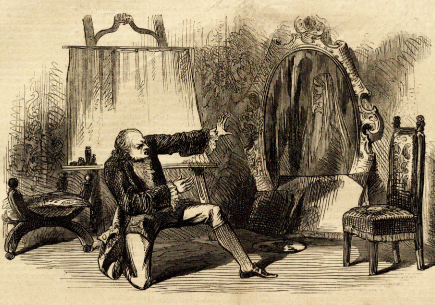
BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

My heart's deep prayer, oh dear and distant friend,
To God is for thy welfare. May this day,
As often as it comes to thee on earth,
Come as an angel. May it always bring
A thousand perfumes on its wings, and chant
In the rich music of a thousand tongues
To thy exulting spirit. Though it comes
In the sad Autumn of the fading year,
When melancholy winds through leafless woods
Are mourning o'er the graves of perished flowers,
Oh, may it ever find within thy heart
Those glorious flowers that perish not, but bloom
Brighter amid the chilling tempest. Thou,
Sweet spirit, hast inherited from Heaven
The fearful dower of genius. Oft it proves
A fatal gift, but may it be to thee
The fount of deathless joys, of ecstasies
Deep, holy, and immortal.
Bright one, thou
Canst bear life's darkest fortunes. If the spring
Of common pleasures perish, and the earth
Be one wide desert where no diamond-wave
Murmurs beneath its palm-tree, thou canst turn
To Heaven's own fount within thy breast, and slake
Thy spirit's burning thirst. There thou canst find
A Paradise unparched by summer heats,
Unvisited by Autumn's chilling frosts,
Unswept by Winter's desolating storms,
Where breezes, birds, and gushing fountains weave
The hymn of Heaven, where myriad roses blow
As bright as if they were the images
Of stars reflected back to their own skies—
A Paradise where gentle angels come
To hold communion with thee, and where God
Walks as of old He walked in Eden's bowers.

THE WHITE TERROR.

BY ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE LOST DEEDS," "THE MYSTERIOUS MARRIAGE," ETC., ETC.



THE "WHITE TERROR."

CHAPTER I.

It was a sombre-looking mansion, that great pile of dingy stucco with mildewed stains upon its crumbling walls, caused by the dampness of the climate, and the heavy shade of trees of tropical growth, matted together by trailing wreaths of Spanish moss which swayed to every breeze, and gave a most funereal aspect to the neglected woodland that surrounded it.

The house was built on the plan of a chateau which had been the ancestral home of the Montreuil family. A cadet of that house emigrated to Louisiana with Bienville, enjoyed opportunities of amassing wealth through the favor of the Governor and laid the foundation of a large fortune.

At a vast expense, he erected with very inferior materials, this building, on the exact plan of his early home, and thus in a newly settled country was found a chateau which, from the effects of the climate, looked as if it might have been built ere yet Columbus had made his great discovery. The house was three stories in hight, and the highest one was lighted by dormer windows, with a heavy parapet in front of them extending the whole length of the roof. It was full of odd corners, angles and winding corridors leading into nooks that would never have been suspected by a stranger.

A pair of octagon towers of later date than the main building were in front, connected by a gallery open above, but enclosed below, to which access was gained by a heavy door, bearing a brass knocker.

What had once been a wide and well kept lawn, was now covered with unpruned vines, shrubbery and weeds, so matted together as to form a complete jungle. The place appeared to be abandoned to silence and neglect, and at the first glance it seemed improbable that so desolate a spot was inhabited; but a closer scrutiny betrayed a few signs of occupation.

The narrow windows in the upper story of the eastern tower were open, and a faded curtain fluttered in the evening breeze.

From the deep shadows of the lawn, an observer would soon have detected a narrow pathway leading to the rear of the house—pursuing this over the neglected and uneven parterre through which it wound, the view widens and discloses a vegetable garden in good order, on which a cabin opens. A small grass plot was in front of it, and a vine bearing crimson trumpet shaped flowers, was trained over the humble portal. A shelf beneath it sustained a water bucket, and milk pans set out "to sun," as the old negress expressed it, in whose charge they were kept.

She sat near the door spinning, and a picturesque figure was old Eady, with her ebony face surmounted by grizzled tufts of wool, half covered by a scarlet bandanna handkerchief, and ornamented with heavy hoops of gold, pendant from her ears. A calico dress of many colors, that rivalled in brilliancy those of Joseph's celebrated coat, extended only to her ankle, where it met a stout brogan designed more for use than ornament.

An old-fashioned wheel was kept busily humming while the negress converted a pile of carded cotton into yarn for her future knitting. The face of the old woman was shrewd, sensible and good humored, and she evidently found much interest in her occupation.

Suddenly she lifted her head, and looked toward the declining sun, and words spoken in a strong Virginia accent broke from her lips:

"I clar' to Moses ef 'taint mos' nite, an' dat ole dunce o' mine aint got back yit. I wonder what new scrape he's gone an' got inter now. De las' time he went to de offis' for letters he drunk so much 'fernal whisky dat I was impelled to blow him up, de ole fool! Ef he comes back agin in such a pickle, oh Lor'! I don't know *what* I shant be tempted to do to him. Ef de marster only knew what *I* knows, what would come o' de bones in dat black nigger's body, I wonder."

She half laughed as the words escaped her, for she recalled Pierre's drunken vagaries with evident internal enjoyment. After a few more moments of watching, Eady put aside her wheel, and with the ease of a practiced hand commenced her preparations for an epicurean supper. That she was an accomplished cook was soon evident, for coffee of most delicate aroma, crisp cakes, and delicious broiled birds were speedily prepared with the skill of a true artiste.

These were served on fine porcelain, and then placed on a silver waiter covered with a napkin of spotless purity. When all was ready, she again took a survey from the door, and returned to raise the tray to her head, as she discontentedly muttered:

"De marster's supper's all ready, an' my ole man aint fotch de letters yit, dat he am so anxious to git. I'm mos' 'fraid to take it up widout 'em; an' I's more 'fraid not to go to onct, caze he'll storm the old tower down ef I d'lays my usual sarvice. Oh Lor'! oh Lor'! what *does* make dat Pierre sich a born numscull?"

With a sigh she poised the waiter lightly upon the folds of her crimson turban: then with quick steps she threaded her way through the garden, opened a side door leading into the house, and entered a wide echoing corridor which made several abrupt angles before it ended at the base of a staircase leading to the second story of the eastern tower.

Doors from long disused apartments opened from this passage, and in the gathering twilight it seemed, to the imagination of the superstitious negress, filled with dusky shadows, and her eyes dilated visibly as they rolled from side to side half in expectation that the doors would unclose and some grim phantom thrust forth its hideous mocking face, and leer at her as she passed upon her way.

To the superstitious fancy of the unlettered black, it was sufficient that human life had ceased to animate these apartments to people them with shadowy existences from another world. Eady could have told many a thrilling tale of faint whispers, rustlings of dress, and echoing steps, made by viewless beings who flitted beside her in her evening jaunts through the old mansion.

The dread in which she held her living master might be measured from the fact that she forced herself to encounter these impalpable beings sooner than fail to take his evening meal at the usual hour.

The corridor was crossed by a wider one at the front of the house, from which ascended a spiral staircase leading to an upper gallery, on which the front towers opened. The railing of this stairway was of carved mahogany, and the steps as well as the floor of the lower hall, were of inlaid wood. The evening sun struggled through the dense woodland without, and lighted this portion sufficiently to show that the frescoed walls were mildewed and falling to decay from neglect and damp.

Yes—it had evidently been a great mansion in its palmy day, but the pride which once sustained its grandeur was laid low in the dust: the hopes that clustered around the hearth of the old homestead were buried in the abyss dug by passion and crime. A blighting curse seemed to hang around the old walls, and the curse of evil passions and unbridled temper certainly dwelt with the solitary old man who lived in that lonely tower.

Eady gained the upper floor, and after a momentary pause in front of her master's door, knocked gently upon it. No answer came, and she muttered, apprehensively:

"Bress de Lor'! de coffee'll git cole, an' marster's temper'll git hot, an' we'll have a 'splosion. What *ar'* he doin', I does wonder."

Again she rapped—this time louder, and a gruff voice called out:

"Can't you come in without all that knocking? Get in with you, you old jackdaw, and don't stand out there till my supper is not fit for a pig to eat."

Thus bidden, the old woman entered a lofty room, of large size and unique adornments. A long table occupied the centre of the floor, on which books and artist's materials were promiscuously scattered; beside this stood an easel, on which was a covered picture. The room was an octagon, and in one of its eight compartments was a fire-place; on one side of this was a well-filled bookcase, in the other hung a large oval mirror, which, on examination, was found to be slightly concave. Then came two windows, occupying the entire width of their respective angles; a third window in front left two spaces upon the wall for the exercise of the artistic talent of their owner, of which he had not neglected to take advantage.

In the first, three figures were represented near a ruined column, the capital of which had fallen off, and lay amid a pile of stones at their feet. The central figure evidently represented Mortality, for death had spread its pallor over her features, and she held in her hand an inverted torch, the ancient emblem of extinguished life. The man and woman, who sat with their backs toward her, though their faces were turned in such a manner as to enable them to examine her attentively, evidently were intended to represent human kind, turning away from the evidence of their own mortality, yet anxious to behold their latter end.

The second compartment showed an escaped spirit, as having first passed through an open portal, into a dusky region, in which he seems to be feeling his way with lingering and uncertain steps. A beautiful woman, fondling a serpent, waits to receive him into immortal life, for the serpent has from great antiquity been considered as an emblem of renovated youth, from the annual casting of his skin.

These pictures were not original conceptions of the painter, but simply copies from casts taken from the antique.

A couch, placed near the front window, and a few chairs, completed the furniture. In one of the latter sat the owner of the place. This was a man over sixty years of age; tall, wiry and brown—his hair whitened to silver, and his face wrinkled and worn more by temper than by time. His black eyes, deep set, vivid as a flame, flashed beneath heavy overhanging brows; and his straight nose, thin lips, and firmly curved chin, all spoke of indomitable will and unflinching purpose; though at moments there was a singular dilation of the pupil of the eyes, which gave an expression of wildness amounting to ferocity to the marked features.

It was the face of a man who had sinned, suffered, but never repented; and as the long, slender hand was stretched out to replace the book he had been reading, it was not difficult to imagine the nervous clutch with which it would close upon a dagger and drive it home to the heart of one who had injured him.

He seemed to have worked himself into a passion at the trifling delay in the appearance of his evening meal, and he glared on the old woman, as she entered and placed the waiter before him, as he growled:

"Humph! so you managed to get in at last, madam. Pray, why did you not enter at once, as I bade you?"

"Because I didn't hear you," replied Eady, in an irritated tone, for she too had a spice of temper, and she had made the notable discovery that the only way to manage the singular being she had to deal with, was to retort upon her master occasionally in his own tone.

He glanced at her with an ominous frown, and then disdainfully examined the delicate repast prepared with so much care. He asked in a voice of extreme irritation:

"How now? Where are the letters and papers for which Pierre was sent?"

"He hasn't come back from de offis yit, Monsher. 'Deed you needn't flare up so, an' look as ef you meant to eat me instid o' yer supper; 'case *I* aint to blame for Pierre's idsincrazys, for I do think the drop he will take when he's out o' my sight makes him sin and crazy too for that matter."

The deep-set eyes flashed angrily upon her, but the absurd pun upon the long word she was fond of using, caused the listener to burst into a wild laugh, which sounded so harsh and mirthless that it was far from reassuring the old woman. She folded her hands before her, and assumed an expression of stubborn endurance, which was perfectly familiar to her master.

"Ah, ha!" he said; "so you've come to me in one of your iron moods to-night, old woman; but fire smelts iron, Jackdaw, and I am a son of flame. Vulcan was my father, and Até my mother; so you had better beware how you arouse the evil temper within me."

"'Deed, sir, I had no such intent; an' ef Até was yer mother, I think her name orter teach you that vittles aint good to eat when dey gits cole. You'd better eat my rice cakes an' drink your coffee, sir, while dey is fit to put into a Christian's stomach."

"Ha! ha! your advice is good, Jackdaw, and I believe I'll take it; but I will wager anything you like—a new turban for yourself or a fresh bottle for Pierre—that you consider my stomach as belonging to anything but a Christian, in spite of your form of speech."

Eady inwardly chuckled at being so thoroughly understood, but she demurely replied:

"'Deed, sir, I should be sorry to think sich a thing o' you. I allers tries to bide by the Scripter sayin', 'judge not lest ye be judged,' and I tries myself to prac*tise* dat charity what covers a multitude o' sins."

"Hem—and in that pharisaical spirit you excuse my short comings. Very well. Now go and see if that wretched old rum-bottle, Pierre, has returned with my letters. It will not be well for you to come back without them, I can tell you."

Thus dismissed, the negress left the room, and the recluse slowly ate his supper, as if he luxuriated in the only sensual indulgence now left to him. He was not a *gourmand*, but a true *bon vivant*, who ate only the most delicate and appetizing viands, with a gusto which enabled him to do entire justice to the merits of the cook who prepared them. Eady knew this perfectly well, and it gave her a sense of security in her humble position, in spite of the unbridled temper with which she had to contend.

Mr. Lecour finished his repast, leaned back in his chair, and luxuriated in the recollection of its merits. To one of his restless temperament, a few moments sufficed for this, and he began to feel impatient for the appearance of the letters which circumstances rendered of unusual interest to him.

He arose and walked up and down the large room with his hands clasped behind his back; at first his steps were slow and regular, but they gradually quickened as his impatience gained the mastery, and the emphasis with which they were struck upon the floor increased, until a perfect storm of sound filled the old tower. Twilight began to deepen, and words were soon added to the clatter of his boots upon the floor.

"Curse the wretches! will they never come with a light? Am I, *I* to be left here till darkness gathers around me? Is it not enough to be alone, always *alone* in the deep hours of night, even with lamps burning around me, but must I be left to fight with the phantom in this awful gray twilight? Ho there—lights, lights, I say, or I will wreak my vengeance upon you, you miserable, inefficient idiots!"

He glanced wildly around in the gathering twilight, and his face became livid as his eyes fell upon the mirror; within it was reflected the shadowy outline of a figure in white, enveloped in a filmy veil that covered her whole person. He looked around the room, saw nothing which could be the substance of that shadow, and with a shriek that ended in a hoarse rattle in his throat, he fell heavily upon the floor.

The noise of his fall quickened the uncertain footsteps that were now heard approaching, and the cracked voice of old Pierre called out querulously:

"Come on, Eady, for de love o' Heaben, for de ole marster is in one o' his tantrums. I carnt see my way befo' me, it's so dark down here. Come faster wi' de light, or he'll strangle me when he comes to hisself."

Thus admonished, the old woman came almost on a run, carrying a wax candle in each hand, for in the maudlin condition of her husband, she was afraid to trust him with either. Pushing past him, she quickly entered the apartment; Pierre followed her more slowly, and his great eyes rolled around the walls with an expression of affright, before they fell on the prostrate form of his master.

Mr. Lecour lay with eyes widely staring, and froth issuing from his lips. It was a piteous sight, that old silver-haired man lying there, with his locked features of an ashen hue, and an expression of utter anguish and fear impressed upon them.

"Ah! it is the *White Terror* again," whispered Eady, as she stooped to raise his head from the floor. "This cussed ole house is to be de death of us all yit. I wish de ebissary would set it afire an' burn it down outright."

"His-s-sh, ole 'oman, his-s-he. Ef de marster was to hear dat wish, he'd murder you sure enough."

"Murder me, indeed!" she contemptuously retorted; "I reckon he's had too much to do wi' sich deviltries as that aforetime, or he wouldn't be so easily scared now. Besides, he'll be glad to keep me alive as long as he lives, dat I may 'pare his vittles as he likes 'em. No—*I* aint 'fraid o' him, but ef you pokes your ugly phizhogamy where he will see it de fust thing when he comes to, he'll be sure to pitch inter you, thinkin' ole Sam have sent one o' his ebessarys to fotch him to de 'fernal regions."

Pierre had been leaning over his master, but at this uncomplimentary caution he suddenly drew back, looked into a mirror which formed the door of the bookcase, and internally acknowledged that it would be no unnatural hallucination on the part of his master; for a more ungainly specimen of the black man could scarcely have been produced than himself.

Dwarfed in size, with crooked limbs, long heels, and the ape-like face which is so often the heritage of the pure-blooded African, that it is impossible to doubt his affinity to the monkey tribe, the old negro, by no violent effort of the imagination, could easily have been mistaken for an agent from the Inferno, by a man half demented by the solitary life he led, and the memory of events in which he had taken a part, which shed a lurid horror over his daily existence.

Eady sprinkled water over the pallid features of her master, chafed his chilled hands, and presently he unclosed his eyes and looked around with an expression of vague terror. He shivered convulsively, and muttered:

"It was a shadow evoked by my own fantasy. My eyes are diseased; I—I must consult an oculist. Lift me up, Jackdaw; help me into my large chair. There—I am well again."

He sunk back upon the well-worn seat, and closed his eyes a few moments; then suddenly arousing himself, he sharply asked:

"Where is Pierre, and what has become of my letters?"

"I's here, marster, an' dis is de passel de young man at de offis gin me for you."

Pierre came forward rather unsteadily, holding a waiter on which he had placed several newspapers, and conspicuously above them two packages bearing a foreign postmark. His master surveyed him leisurely and searchingly, and grasping one of the papers, he hurled it contemptuously at his head as he exclaimed:

"Drunk again, you old baboon! Get out of my presence, and leave Jackdaw to wait upon me."

Though mortally afraid of the darkness and loneliness without, and the airy shapes with which his superstitious imagination peopled the old mansion, the negro stood in even greater dread of his irritable master. He hurriedly consigned the waiter with its contents to his wife, and retreated, though he took good care not to go beyond the threshold of the door, which he closed very imperfectly.

In the transfer of the waiter, one of the letters slipped down and rested against the other package, with the address turned toward Mr. Lecour. His eyes fell upon it, he gasped, grew paler than before, and Eady thought he was about to fall into another spasm, but he recovered immediately, clutched the letter with an expression of ferocious endurance, and examined the writing as he muttered:

"This should have been written by the dead, the hand is so much the same as *hers*. Pooh! I am a fool! It is but the same writing taught to every girl who is educated in that convent. Ha! from my *beloved* grand-daughter."

The sardonic emphasis upon the endearing epithet revealed a whole history of estrangement, wrong and bitterness; he tore open the envelope, which contained two letters, one from the lady superior of the convent, the other from his young relative. Giving precedence to that of the elder lady, he unclosed it and read the following lines:

PARIS, CONVENT OF LA MERE DE DIEU.

M. LECOUR:—In consequence of the failure of the agent to settle the account due for Mademoiselle Adrienne Durand's board for the last year, I decline to retain her any longer under my protection, unless she will consent to assume the veil. In her position, it will probably be best for her future happiness and respectability to abjure the world and all its vanities, but I regret to state that she by no means agrees with me in these views.

With the ardent impulsiveness of her years and temperament, she declares that death will be preferable to seclusion from a sinful world, which her imagination decks with most deceptive attractions. She has been permitted to cultivate an intimacy with a classmate who is the daughter of a high dignitary of state, and on two occasions she has visited her at her father's chateau. This was against my own judgment, but the position of Mademoiselle Le Grand's family is such that I could not very well refuse a favor petitioned for by her. This young lady has a cousin who is represented as handsome and insinuating, and I am afraid his flatteries have made a deeper impression upon your young relative than is desirable, for she seems very miserable since her return to her old duties.

I desire to have your views with regard to the future destiny of my interesting charge. Is it your wish that she shall take the veil? You have never positively stated your intentions with regard to her, and therefore she has been permitted to exercise a degree of liberty which I am now half disposed to regret. Armed with your authority, the Bishop, aided by Father Eustace, who is a most eloquent and subtle pleader, will place before this refractory young girl such an array of arguments in favor of entering the sisterhood over which I preside, that no alternative but submission will be left.

You must be aware that only as *one of ourselves* can we, without further expense to you, retain Mademoiselle Adrienne till her reversionary expectations are realized. If she takes the vows, there will be no further demand upon your fortune while you live to enjoy it yourself. At your death, the estate must descend to her as your natural heir, and the sisterhood, to which it will bring extended means of doing good, will offer up daily prayers for the repose of your soul. How much you will need such intercessions no one knows more thoroughly than yourself.

There is another strong reason for wishing to retain Mademoiselle Durand as one of our community. She is a somnambulist, and with proper cultivation can probably be made a most interesting and valuable helpmeet. Under the circumstances, we are willing to retain her without remuneration until her inheritance falls to her.

Hoping to hear from you without any unnecessary delay, I am
Ursula,
Lady Abbess of *La Mère de Dieu*.

Mr. Lecour glowered over the signature, and for a few moments seemed absorbed in thought. With a curling lip, he at length refolded it, and opened the other letter. This was written in a delicate but firm hand, and the clear, upward strokes indicated strength of will that would as little brook opposition as his own.

It was the first communication he had ever received from the writer, for at his own request Mademoiselle Durand had not been permitted to trouble him with letters. On his part, it was an act of magnanimous charity to have educated the child of his disowned daughter in a respectable manner; and he did not choose to be annoyed either with thanks or complaints. Such was Mr. Lecour's view of a sacred duty. The letter ran thus:

At last, my dear grandfather, am I allowed the privilege of addressing you. I have yearned for this indulgence, but the Superior always assured me that you had no wish to be reminded of my existence; that, as the child of a man you hated and a daughter you disowned, I am odious to you. Ah! *mon père*, this seems very hard to me, for I am innocent of offence toward you. I have no other relative on earth, and my heart naturally turns toward you as its most important object. I have always cherished a most profound veneration and affection for you, and this feeling gives me the right to appeal to you in the present crisis of my destiny.

No efforts have been spared by those around me to influence my mind to the choice of a conventual life, and no training could more signally have failed to attain its object.

I would sooner be thrown upon the world to gain my bread by the hardest toil, than embrace it. Save me, my mother's father—save the child of her you must once have loved, from such a fate, for I avow to you that it will be far worse than death to me.

Permit me to come to your own home; let me become the stay and solace of your declining years, for I am bright as the sunshine in my temper, lively and blithe as the birds in springtime, and I will fill your sombre mansion with the light of youth and hope.

See how attractive my egotism leads me to describe myself, but it is a happy self-conceit which enables me to depict in pleasant colors a creature whose tenderest hope on earth is to minister to your happiness in those years when the "grasshopper has become a burden, and the desire of the heart has failed."

Try me, dear sir; let me at least come to you, and if I should prove a burden, it will then be time enough to consign me to the tender mercies of the Bishop and his allies. If you refuse my prayer, I do not know what the consequences may be, for I have friends who will aid me to escape the fate I have not chosen for myself, and I declare to you that I will avail myself of their assistance at all hazards, sooner than become that aimless, hopeless being, a nun.

Dear grandfather, write to me for once with your own hand, and give me the coveted assurance that your heart and home are open to your own Adrienne.

The recluse read this letter twice over, and then rested his head upon his hand in deep meditation. He at length abruptly spoke:

"Well, Jackdaw, don't you think that a young lady, educated in France with all the modern accomplishments, would have a nice time here in this old ghost-haunted house, with no one but you or me for company?"

Eady opened her eyes very wide, as she energetically replied:

"Ef she have a roof over her head, sir, I'd 'vise her to stay whar she am. Oh, Lor! what would 'come o' a young gal brung here in dis ole rattle-trap, to fret herself sick ober things she couldn't mend, not ef she broke her heart a-tryin'."

The listener shrugged his shoulders. He sardonically said:

"But if it is her own choice, what then? If no other home is open to her, what can she do but make the best of this? Besides, she wishes to come to me; prays to be allowed to take care of me in my old age. I begin to feel that I need some one in the place of your poor dumb child, who can look after——"

He paused—made a significant sign which Eady seemed to comprehend, for she quickly said:

"An' would you trust her wi' *dat?* even if she do come. I do think it is de bery wust notion dat could git inter a young gal's head to come to sich a den as dis ere. Who is dis young creetur, an' how is it dat she have no frien's to help her to somethin' better?"

"This young girl is my ward, and my house, or a convent for life, are the alternatives to choose from."

"Den may God help her," responded the old woman, sincerely; "an' ef *I* could get to speak to her, I'd 'vise her to stay wi' de nuns, sooner den come to sich a life as she'd lead here."

"You're a fool, Jackdaw, and always have been one. You have sunshine, food, fire, and shelter, with only work enough to keep you busy, and yet you dare to grumble, and speak of my house as if it is no fit place for my granddaughter to dwell in."

Eady opened her great round eyes wider than ever, as she repeated:

"Grand-darter, sir? I never knowed afore dat sich a chile was on de yeth. Long as I've lived in dis dismal sperrit-haunted house, I's never hearn de fust blessed word 'bout dis young lady till now."

"It would be strange if you had, when it is a subject on which I take no pleasure in talking. But I *have* a grand-child who was born before you ever saw Louisiana—I have placed strange servants about me, that I might not be pestered with inquiries about a girl whose existence is no pleasure to me."

"An' ef de young lady is of your blood, why should she be sent away from her natural gardeen?"

"That is my affair, Jackdaw, and I do not see fit to explain it to you. I only think it is necessary to inform you that your rule in this house may be interfered with before long by a young lady, who comes at her own desire, from the convent in which she has been educated, to take charge of Castle Dismal and its queer inhabitants. I fancy she'll not stay long here, but as she wishes to come very earnestly, I think it may be as well to gratify her, and serve my own purposes at the same time."

Eady listened in extreme surprise. If the advent of an angel had been announced to her she would scarcely have been more astonished than she was at this unexpected revelation. She vaguely knew that Mr. Lecour had been married in early life; that his wife had died within a year of their union; but that a child had been the offspring of that marriage, she was profoundly ignorant till that moment. She looked so much bewildered that her master went on to explain that his daughter had not married to please him, that she died early, leaving an infant daughter orphaned and dependent. He had placed her in a convent in France, where she had received an accomplished education.

Mr. Lecour then went on:

"I hardly know why I have told you this news so early, Jackdaw, for it must be some time before Mademoiselle Durand can come hither; but perhaps it is as well for you to know it now, as you will have time to reconcile yourself to the thought of a mistress. I do not think she will trouble you long, however, for I do not care to have her residence here made agreeable enough to induce her to prolong it. I only consent to her coming at all, because I do not choose to pledge myself to any future endowment to the convent that shelters her; if she should be induced to take the veil."

"An' you is really an' spontaciously agwine to bring a young lady wi' all sorts o' gimcracks in her brain, inter Castle Dismal to fret the heart out o' you, an' herself too? I 'clar' to Moses, it's past believin'."

"It will become a self-evident fact before many months have rolled away. Ah—h—h—what is that? Move the lights to a better position—chase the shadows from every part of the room. Here it is! twice in the same night! Oh! the curse of my life has come back! Eady, the White Terror has again appeared to me—and there—yes—there it is again!"

The woman followed the wild glance of terror that he cast toward the door of the apartment which she saw was slowly opening, and a head covered with a white wrapping was cautiously protruded through the opening. She instantly comprehended that it was a *ruse* practiced by her husband to work on the superstitious fears of her master, while he introduced at least a portion of his person into the room in which light and life were found; for Pierre had suffered untold agonies in his place of banishmennt, while this conference lasted. He finally wrapped the napkin from the supper tray around his black head, and, reckless of consequences, resolved to personate the white phantom which had become the terror of his master's life.

It was pitiable to see that strong man shiver and grow pale before this miserable attempt at ghost-playing on the part of his servant. He sank back with drops of cold perspiration starting from his brow, his form collapsed and trembling with dread. He whispered:

"Stand between me and the phantom shape, Eady. Shield my sight from it, and ask it what it seeks?"

He put up his hands to vail it from his view, but the old woman indignantly said:

"It's only dat ole drunken fool, Pierre, who is mortal 'feard to stay out thar by hisself, an' he's gone to play off his antics to scare you. Hi! dis chile jes wish you'd break every bone in his imperant body."

Her wish seemed likely to meet with speedy fulfillment, for it was no sooner uttered than her master sprang up in a perfect fury of passion, and rushed toward the door, exclaiming, in tones hoarse with rage:

"How dare you put that *white* thing upon your head! How dare you attempt to personate the baleful shape that haunts me forever!"

Pierre snatched the napkin from his head, caught a glimpse of the flaming eyes, livid lips flecked with foam, and the steel-like talons ready to grasp him and inflict condign punishment upon his person, and his terror of the darkness without became trifling in comparison with the real danger that menaced him from the wrath of his master. He retreated precipitately, dropping the linen on the floor just in front of the door, and the next instant the sound of a body falling from the top to the bottom of the staircase was heard.

The monomaniac paused suddenly in front of the white streak made by the discarded napkin upon the floor, and shrank back, muttering to himself. He re-entered the room, and said to Eady, in imperious tones:

"Go—leave me alone. I hope that stupid idiot has broken his neck. If he has, call me, and I will help you to take his body from my neighborhood."

Eady hurriedly lighted a small lamp, and with a look of affright hastened to ascertain the extent of the injury sustained by her husband. She found Pierre sitting at the foot of the staircase, rubbing his head with a bewildered expression; but, as he had luckily fallen on as thick a skull as ever belonged to one of his race, he had escaped without any serious injury to his ungainly person.

"Git up, an' git out o' dis here, you ole black porpess," was the ungracious address of his affectionate spouse, as she attempted to raise her liege lord from his recumbent position.

"Oh lor! oh lor!" groaned Pierre. "Aint it 'fishent punishment to fall down 'mong de witches, an' be broke all to smash, widout havin' you an' your tongue to rate me 'bout it. Put your white handkercher on de step, an' ole clatter boots won't dare to pass ober it. I mus' git time to cotch my bref."

"Ketch your bref indeed, when you're snortin' like a grampous. You'm usin' too much bref all to onct, ole fellah, an' I 'vise you to 'conomize a leettle o' dat, as well as your sarce 'bout de marster, for ef he hearn dem words as you said jes' now, he'd make a white ghose o' you 'fore you'd know whar you was, or what had happened to you."

"I wonder ef niggers will make *white* ghostesses," was Pierre's rejoinder, to which he ruefully added: "I's seen it sure enough, Eady. It brushed past me on de gal'ry, as I ran 'way from de ole man."

"*What* has you seen?" asked his wife apprehensively.

"De White Terror."

Eady gave him a violent shake, and dragged him away, as she indignantly said:

"You're drunk, an' you don't know what you seen. As to de marster's ghose nobody's seen it but hisself, so *you* needn't set yourself up wi' havin' second sight. *You* never saw no more ghose den I did."

"But I did, I tell you."

"Ah' what was it like?"

"It was jes' a woman, all in white, an' it was 'bout as tall as de mistris was. I b'lieve 'twas her, too."

Eady paused, shook her finger solemnly at him, and said:

"De trufe aint in you, Pierre, but dis is de biggest whopper o' all. *You* seen a ghose, indeed! Go to bed, an' sleep off de fumes o' de whisky."

CHAPTER II.

Left alone, Mr. Lecour listened to the sounds made by the retreating pair till they died away in the distance. He then carefully fastened his door, surveyed every portion of the room, and re-arranged the lights in such a manner as to throw no decided shadows on any angle. Placing himself beside the table, he again took up the letter of the abbess, and carefully re-perused it.

An expression of bitter mockery flitted over his features as he read again and again a single sentence, and he sneered:

"Cleverly expressed, faith! 'Until her reversionary expectations are realized.' In plain words, till I am dead and out of the way, they will keep the girl in consideration of the rich inheritance she may claim. Ha! they don't know as much as I do about this estate, or they would scarcely calculate on the right of my grand-daughter to inherit it. It would be a good trick to let the greedy cormorants keep the girl under the impression that she is the true heiress, and when the evil one claims me, leave behind me the proof that she has no legal claim on a single acre. I have half a mind to do so, for it will be a risk to have this girl here. What can I do with her? Disgust her with life, and make her commit suicide, or take refuge in her convent again? The last is not a probable alternative, after her energetic protest against the life of a nun. The first a little unpleasant to contemplate, as she is really bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. Ugh! I hated her father, I cursed her mother, and their child must come to me at last, to become the solace of my declining years. Ha! ha! a joyful consolation the daughter of Julien Durand is likely to become to me—*me*, accursed as I am among men, bearing a seared heart and withering brain; mocked at by friends, haunted by a phantom whose mission it is to avenge the dead, even before I swell their ghastly ranks. No, no, no; let her dwell amid peaceful, God-fearing women, even if the monotony of their existence does eat into her weary soul. Better even that, than the awful existence she must lead with me."

He seized a pen, and rapidly wrote:

Adrienne:—I dare not grant your prayer to come to me. I have no fitting home in which to receive you, and my heart is closed to every appeal from your father's child. He was my enemy—I loathed him; I hurled my malediction upon the ungrateful daughter who forsook me for him, and now you, their child, ask to be taken to my heart.

It is impossible, for that heart has become a baleful flame of hate which consumes itself, and leaves no genial spot on which love can repose. I am a man blighted by the indulgence of my own passions. See, I do not throw the blame on others; I know that my career has been evil, my conduct toward those nearest to me harsh and cruel. Therefore am I left in my old age isolated, hopeless, yet not utterly wretched.

I have my own pursuits, innocent they now are, and I wish to have no further temptation to evil. Should you come to me, my old propensity would return; to torment, to abuse the power placed in my hands is the irrevocable law of my nature, and I must obey it.

Poor child, remain with the good sisters; they will be kinder to you than I ever can; they are innocent, they are pure, and you will not be contaminated by coming in contact with guilt.

You cannot brighten me. I am but a blighted ruin around which no ivy may twine its clinging verdure. I can bestow a small endowment upon the convent, which will secure to you a respectable position among its inmates. Beyond that I cannot go, for my possessions are much overrated, and the bulk of my wealth must go to other claimants. It will be best for your earthly, as well as your heavenly welfare, for you to remain in your present secure and respectable asylum. Believe me, that weary as this lot seems to you, it is far preferable to the future you would embrace in coming to me; therefore I must lay upon you my positive command to remain in your convent. Etienne Lecour.

A few lines were then rapidly dashed off in reply to the Superior.

Madame:—Your letter has been received by me and perused with much surprise. I have been under the impression that the child of my deceased daughter was received as a protegée of your own, without reference to the pension it has been my will to pay you. That has been withdrawn at my command, for Adrienne has now reached an age which will enable her to be of use to you in the school under your supervision. She is now eighteen, and for two years past has been quite capable of earning her own living by assisting you; nay, I am well informed that such has been her employment, and yet you ask of me money to defray expenses she has more than paid by her services.

You ask from me authority to retain her with you, and plainly insinuate that such authority will be a guarantee that my fortune shall eventually be absorbed in the coffers of your convent. Madame, I will reveal to you a secret that may become important to you. My wealth is simply a life interest in a large landed estate which was the inheritance of my second wife, Madame Louise Mendon, *née* Montreuil. Adrienne has no claim upon it; the law of Louisiana is rigid on that point, and there are claimants enough to dispute the succession if I should be so silly as to bequeath it to any relation of my own.

From my savings I may be able to afford a small endowment for Mademoiselle Durand, but it will only come to her at my decease. If you choose to do so, keep her with you; I disclaim all interest in her; or if you find her intractable, let her take her fate in her own hands. She has attained an age which will enable her to provide for herself. The child of Julien Durand will scarcely repay me for a different course toward her, for there is rebellion in her blood, and I do not care to have her near me as a memento of scenes I would gladly forget.

I repeat, Madame, that it is my earnest wish that this young girl shall remain with you. If possible, induce her to embrace the life of a *religieuse*. You were once gifted with eloquence; use it, Madame, wisely, gently, but firmly, and convince the wayward child with whom you have to deal that she *must* remain with you.

I live in a wretched, decaying mansion, which my neighbors have appropriately named Castle Dismal. I have two old half-demented servants as my attendants, and I receive no visitors. Judge, then, if a young girl could reside with me and be contented.

I use my brush to perpetuate the horrors I have witnessed, have borne a part in, and the ghastly evidences of my artistic talent form a gallery as unique as it would be frightful to the outside world, had they permission to behold it. But it is sacred to myself; not even the old negress who is my housekeeper, cook, and housemaid, has ever gained a glimpse of my treasures, though she avers that the room in which they are kept is haunted by evil demons, and she trembles to pass it alone in the twilight.

Pardon me, Madame; I grow garrulous with my pen, but my life is so lonely that I may allow myself the indulgence of writing freely to the only human being on earth around whom the golden memories of youth and love yet linger. Madame, does it not seem a mockery that I, a gray-haired, callous-hearted recluse, should refer to that romance enacted when we were both young and silly? You preferred a cloister to the fatal gift of my affections, and after events proved that you did well. I salute you, lady superior of a holy sisterhood, and ask the benefit of your prayers. Etienne Lecour.

When he had finished his letters, Mr. Lecour arose and paced his room violently and noisily, as if to lose in motion the sense of wretchedness that oppressed him. He paused several times beside the table, and poured brandy from a bottle that stood upon it; this did not sufficiently soothe the nervous irritation from which he was suffering, and he took from the wall a Turkish pipe and filled the bowl with a drug, the use of which was then almost unknown in Europe—it had been sent to him from India by a brother, who was a physician there, with directions for its use.

Soon the smoke of the hatchis began to circle around the room, and the faint, sickening odor of the gum diffused itself through the atmosphere. The eyes of the smoker assumed a strange, wild glare, and the pupils dilated to an unusual size. Fantastic forms began to flit before his excited vision, which at first seemed clothed in light, but these soon gave place to others of a more fearful character.

Mr. Lecour continued to smoke on, in the hope that the increased influence of the drug would chase these away, and bring back the brighter visions. Suddenly his eyes fell upon a small clock, on the face of which was a calendar that unerringly pointed out the day of the month—

"The twentieth of January!"

The pipe dropped from his nerveless grasp, and his face became even more cadaverous than before. Striking his hand upon his brow, he almost shrieked:

"It is the anniversary of that fatal day when God's anointed fell beneath the hands of his cruel subjects. That awful shape may come again! How could I forget? Eady! Pierre! come back—come back, and watch beside me!"

His voice grew strained and harsh with fear, and he trembled before the unseen terror he believed was approaching him. Regicide, Jacobin, his hand was yet red with the blood shed during that fatal era, and he knew that this night must prove one of terrible suffering to himself.

Mr. Lecour staggered up, and approached the door with the half-formed intention of flying through the darkness of the long corridors, till he reached the house occupied by the negroes; but his nervous trepidation was so great that he could not turn the key in the lock.

His senses deserted him, and he madly shrieked:

"Ha! I hear it! The demons are at their work already; they have fastened me in that they may have me at their mercy. Hark! I hear their steps flitting, flitting through the hall.

"Soon they will be here.

"There! there! they are beside me now! I see the shadowy procession of the dead whom *I* helped to send to the grave. Yes—they are bloody phantoms, carrying their heads upon their hands, and the writhing lips mock and gibber at me. Hark! What do they say?

"'Come with us; you marshalled us to the guillotine, come now and tramp with us our dance of death.' Yes—I must—I *must* go, when you command."

Lifting his hands as if grasping those of an imaginary partner, Mr. Lecour commenced a wild gallopade through the large room, uttering himself a shrill whistle, to the music of which he continued his weird dance, till he fell utterly exhausted upon the floor.

The autumn wind had risen almost to a gale, and as it swept in gusts past the old tower, the branches of the trees without rattled sharply against the window panes. The dampness of the atmosphere caused the wood of which the furniture was made to snap with quick sharp reports, and each one sounded in the ears of the prostrate man as an ominous warning that the spirits of the dead were flitting through the room. The lights flickered in the draughts which forced themselves into the apartment, and he fancied that goblin shapes were hovering over them making efforts to extinguish them, and leave him to the added horror of darkness.

The eyes of the prostrate old man wandered around the room, and fastened themselves with a sickening thrill of awe upon his easel. It stood in the full glare of light, and in his mad dance he must have swept aside the curtain that hung over it; but he now gazed upon it with the firm conviction that some viewless hand had removed the covering from his work.

The painting represented a woman not yet past middle age, with a face once regally handsome, but now worn and pallid, yet still lofty and unsubdued amid the evident squalor that surrounded her, for she sat in a narrow prison cell, and the delicate hands were endeavoring to mend a broken shoe with an old bodkin, and a thread drawn from the coarse garment which clothed her stately form. A mass of long, thick hair, white as a snowdrift, hung loosely over her shoulders, and the pale face looked out from it with a fixed expression of endurance, which revealed the indomitable soul within.

Around the slender throat was drawn a faint crimson line, so shadowy that it seemed a vapor of blood symbolizing the doom of the morrow, rather than the actual impress of the knife. It was evidently the daughter of the Cæsars, the beautiful Marie Antoinette, the night before her execution, endeavoring to prepare her death toilet with some regard to external decency, even amid the ruthless mob that dragged her to the scaffold.

It was wonderfully life-like her, for the painter had seen her thus employed—he had stood as the last sentinel over that fallen majesty, and daguerreotyped her image so indelibly upon his brain as to be able to reproduce it with startling fidelity.

He had rode with her to the scaffold, stood beside the executioner when he lifted the gory head from the basket, and exhibited the features of her who had once been their queen, to the hootings and revilings of the pitiless mob.

No wonder this man was a monomaniac, for his were terrible memories to carry into the deep solitude in which he lived. Impelled by some impulse that he could not conquer, he had painted that head again and again, though the ineffably sad face was an inexpressible horror to him.

Now he fancied that the bowed head was lifted, the locked lips unclosed, and the cry:

"Where is my child?" seemed to issue from them. "Restore him to his own—now is your only chance to do so."

"The same message," he muttered—"always the same; this time with a slight addition. *She* knows yet what is passing on earth. Yes—if I dared I would make this atonement, but what could the poor imbecile do?"

By a violent effort he closed his eyes, and when he opened them again he saw that the head was in its usual position, and a gleam of judgment assured him that it was only his own fantasy which had produced the illusion. He laughed aloud, and to his excited senses the laugh seemed echoed from every angle of the room. Starting up to do battle with the unseen enemies who jeered at him thus, the old man staggered feebly from side to side, wildly striking in the empty space around him.

At length he fell exhausted upon the sofa which usually served him as a bed. His body rested there, but his spirit still wrestled with the weird shapes his own imagination evoked from the bloody record of the past. At length, unable to endure more, he drew from his pocket a small box, and took from it a portion of the dark green paste it contained. This soon produced a dull, benumbing sensation, and sleep, scarcely less terrible than his waking fancies, fell upon his senses.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A MANŒUVERER FOILED.

It was just half past eight o'clock in the morning, when Mrs. De Lacey, accompanied by her "companion," Florence Chester, first sailed into the long breakfast-room of the Willard Hotel at the celebrated —— Springs, looking bewitchingly coquettish and piquant in a well-chosen morning costume.

Mrs. De Lacey was quite conscious of the notice she attracted, and enjoyed it excessively. She had not before appeared in American society since her return from Europe, where she had lost her husband. She had come now to —— Springs, with the full intention of creating a sensation. Her practiced eye, and a still subtler sense that belongs to the *habitués* of society, assured her, long before this first breakfast was over, that she had succeeded.

Mrs. De Lacey had enjoyed the possession of a large income during her husband's lifetime, but on his death, she, being childless, was compelled to see nearly everything that she had been accustomed to look upon as her own pass into the hands of the members of his family, the heirs-at-law.

It is true she had quite enough to have enabled her to live in quiet independence, but that sort of life had no charms for her; and she intended so to arrange her plans of campaign, that long ere the real truth in relation to her fortune should reach the ears of the public, she could secure a lover, or make a brilliant match; and her brothers-in-law were ready to aid her in her plans.

Florence Chester's father, a friend of Mr. De Lacey, had died abroad, before his friend, who at once took the orphan to his home. Thus she had established a sort of claim upon the widow, though in truth she owed her nothing beyond gratitude for her protection. Her scanty inheritance was already sufficiently augmented by the result of her own efforts to render her perfectly independent in a pecuniary point of view.

Mrs. De Lacey was soon surrounded by admirers. Her beauty, her fascinating manners, the reputation of her wealth all conspired to make her the centre of attraction. Near this bright centre, a pale satellite, indeed, amidst the radiance of the widow's charms, was ever seen the quiet, gentle Florence Chester. There was one among the crowd, who, from having at first conceived a violent prejudice against her, had come to feel a strange and most unaccountable interest in the girl who, like a silent, beautiful statue, save that her face now and then lighted up splendidly at the utterance of a noble sentiment, was always present during his frequent conversations with Mrs. De Lacey. There was a singular attraction for Charles Belden in that silent figure. He made his visits even more frequent to the widow's parlor, where he was sure of seeing her. He knew that he might create false hopes in Mrs. De Lacey, but he had discovered that her heart was not likely to take much part in the game that had become perceptible to him, and therefore had no compunctions.

Mrs. De Lacy had singled out Charles Belden as the most desirable of all her admirers. He was rich, had travelled and lived much abroad, and belonged to one of the best New York families. He "suited" Mrs. De Lacey exactly, and that lady was by no means pleased to note his attempts to draw Miss Chester into conversation, or the continual wandering of his glances toward the window where she sat, while she herself was exerting all her brilliant powers for his entertainment.

"It cannot be possible," she said, in self-communion, "it surely is almost beyond the pale of possibility that Charles Belden can find anything in Florence to admire beyond her beauty, which is hardly of a kind to attract a man of society such as he is. But lest there should be something of this, I will take care to render Florence more distant and repellant to him than she is at present. I cannot, I ought not, *I will not* allow such a prize to slip from my hands, just as it seemed almost gained."

She started up as she spoke, and paced her chamber nervously. The season was nearly passed, and her purpose yet ungained. In her security relative to Charles Belden, she had relaxed her efforts in other directions. She had reason to believe that the fact of her want of fortune was becoming known. The second on her list of eligibles was already secured by another. Every day lessened her chances, and increased the liability of defeat. There was no time for delay, and she had already resolved on her course when Florence knocked at her door to inform her that the hour for their daily walk had arrived, and thus afforded her the opportunity she desired.

In a little while the two were seated beneath a tree—a favorite seat that commanded the broad esplanade, at that period of the day usually thronged with promenaders. Here Mrs. De Lacey, in the intervals of her numerous flirtations, knew she would have ample leisure for that "little conversation" which she desired to hold with Florence.

"A splendid man is the Count de B——," she commenced; "I think he quite admires you, Florence."

"If never noticing me is evidence of that, I can readily agree with you," replied Florence, looking up from her book. "But I trust you are mistaken."

"Why should you trust so, my dear? All girls are desirous of marriage, I suppose, and you will surely marry."

"I am not so sure of that. I have never received an offer, nor wished for one."

"Tell me truly, now, Florence, is there not some gentleman here whom you admire more than another?"

"There are several," answered Florence, giving her book a glance that showed that she would gladly return to it; "more than one whom I admire."

"But one above all—Charles Belden, for instance?"

Florence hesitated.

"I consider Mr. Belden a most brilliant person, and I believe him to be unexceptional in all respects. But I have never thought of him in any light but that of your friend."

"But he is scarcely that," the widow replied languidly. "I don't deny that he was much struck, greatly attracted at first, but you who understand me—who know where my heart lies buried in the grave of my poor husband—should know, also, that I could have given him no encouragement. Indeed I have taken means to have him informed.——But enough of this. I only wish that he did not dislike you so much. I should so like to see you his wife."

For the first time Florence was interested in the widow's remarks.

"Does he dislike me, then?" she asked, while tears rose to her eyes, and she cast a troubled, anxious glance upon her companion's face.

"Yes, extremely. He said—perhaps I should not tell you—but he said to Mrs. Carlyle that you were so stiff, so distant, so formal that he never dared approach you lest he should become morally frozen. He compared you to the snow images that boys sometimes make—he said you were haughty without any basis for haughtiness, in short, that he was disgusted by your airs, by your assumption of superiority."

Florence's lip quivered. She was silent for a moment after her friend concluded. When she spoke there was a perceptible tremor in her voice, but she said, calmly:

"I am sorry for this. I was not aware that I had given cause for such dislike. It is unmanly, I think, to speak of me thus, and I shall always retire from Mr. Belden's presence whenever I in future find myself in it."

Perhaps Mrs. De Lacey might have replied to this with characteristic hypocrisy, but some friends came up at that instant, and she strolled away with them, leaving Florence still sitting beneath the tree—still sitting with her eyes fixed upon the book that trembled in her little hand.

But scarcely had Mrs. De Lacey disappeared, than a rustling might have been heard in the shrubs that surrounded the base of the tree, and quite concealed another seat on the opposite side. In another moment Charles Belden stood before the astonished Florence. Crimsoning deeply, she started up, and would have made her escape, but Mr. Belden gently detained her.

Scarcely were the Christmas fetes past, on the following winter, when Blank Square became suddenly gay, on a certain brilliant winter morning, with the throng of carriages that poured into its aristocratic precincts, carrying their freight of elegance and fashion to the bridal reception of the young Mrs. Charles Belden. Among the first who approached the lovely bride, as she stood at the end of the long splendid vista of drawing-rooms, was Mrs. De Lacey hastening to welcome her quondam "companion" to the splendors for which she had herself sighed and manœuvred in vain. It was her kinsman's carriage that brought her to the fête, and in his carriage she still rides, when her poverty does not compel her to the humbler expedient of pedestrianism."

MY DARLING.

O leave me here to wander alone
Under the bloom of the apple trees,
For here my darling used to come
And grow to th' beauty of days like these!

In this orchard, she used to say,
She had felt the clover grow under her feet,
And now it is plain to me, that is the way
She came to be all that is pretty and sweet.

With clover to tread on, and blossoms o'erhead,
No wonder her lips caught their exquisite hue,
And to murmuring bees and to wild-bird she said
Her heart beat the time for their music, she knew.

She gazed on the clouds, and grew dreamy thereby—
She talked to the winds till her spirit grew light,
And floated in vision far up the blue sky,
Catching glimpses of heaven that dazzled her sight.

So leave me here to wander alone,
For my darling in spirit may be in the place;
And I yet may learn more than I ever have known,
From nature that taught her such infinite grace.

El Mina.

HESTON AND HIS WIFE.

A DOMESTIC SKETCH.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Slight, spare, darkly pale, with raven black hair, and deep, unfathomable eyes, with thoughtful, abstracted air, but active movements—in fine, a *tout ensemble* that pleased and attracted without commanding admiration—such was Daniel Heston at twenty. He was a mere boy—a boy of the middle class, in a country village; but there was something about him—the germ, or indication of the future man—a latent, undeveloped power which could still only be felt but was not seen, that caused all to treat him with such outward marks of respect as were, his age and station alone considered, almost preposterous.

To the superficial observer he was merely a slight, handsome youth, who toiled all day at tasks rude and uncongenial to his fine organization, who mingled little in the social festivities of the youthful portion of the village community, but spent nearly all his leisure time in absorbing study. But perhaps it was the very persistence of the boy, who could so calmly forego all the ordinary pleasures of his age, while, with a great purpose kept ever in view, he steadily pursued the course he had marked out for himself, that won the involuntary respect of all who knew him, save only the frivolous few whose life-aims were as low as his were high.

Pretty, graceful, plump, blue-eyed and rosy—a gay, piquant girl, was Ellen Luce, whose home was in the same village. Her beauty attracted all who saw her, and her pleasing manners made her a favorite in all circles which she entered.

Daniel Heston never mingled in society, but he frequently met Ellen Luce upon the streets, or saw her passing the shop where he worked. He saw that she was beautiful, and knew that she was gay. He believed her as good as she was lovely in all external aspects, for it was one of the boy's theories that, in human beings, outward beauty was ever the expression of a corresponding inner grace. Long before he had ever addressed her, he had learned to love her—to worship her would, perhaps, express more fitly the intense silent emotion in which he shrined, within the depths of his being, the image and ideal of this beautiful girl.

All at once awoke the consciousness in his soul that, being a man, with all a man's attributes and powers, even though latent, capable of development, he must not of necessity confine himself to this distant and silent worship. He resolved to approach the object of his devotion, to become acquainted with her, to talk to her, and sun himself in her smiles.

Once resolved, and with him to will was to do, the rest was comparatively easy. He had known Ellen Luce, years before, as a child at school—that is, they, for she was of the same age, had sat on opposite sides of the old brown school-house, and had even read in the same classes for a few months; but they had never spoken together, and the young man had no reason to suppose that the girl remembered him. But he had sometimes encountered her father in the way of business, and he knew that through him he might easily gain admittance to the home which held his heart's idol.

He made his approaches awkwardly enough to the father, for Daniel was not skilled in social diplomacy; but he accomplished his purpose, and that sufficed for him. He had gained his *entrée*, and soon became a habitual guest in the Luce household.

I am bound to say that Miss Ellen did not share or reciprocate the devotion of her admirer. She acknowledged that his countenance was attractive, but she found much to criticise in his manners.

The facts were, that though only a few months his senior in earthly existence, she was much older than he in development, in knowledge of the world, in manner and tact. And while she acknowledged his mental superiority, and felt for him, in a degree, the involuntary respect with which he inspired all, she still scorned him as a "mere boy," and made much sport for herself and her associates by describing, with no little comic talent, the thousand and one solecisms in manner of which he was continually guilty.

Daniel Heston saw nothing of this. He was too fully absorbed, too single in purpose, to be able to turn his attention to side issues. He thought only of his love for Ellen Luce, and of the fixed determination he had formed of winning her. He continued to visit her on every opportunity afforded him, but was compelled, without in the least understanding the reason, to admit that he made little or no progress in his suit.

A year or more after the commencement of his acquaintance with Ellen Luce, an opening for business in a distant part of the State was presented to him. His friends deemed it best that he should accept it, and he saw for himself that it would be wise for him to do so. It promised well in a pecuniary point of view, and it was time that he should begin to lay the foundations of that prosperity which he felt bound to secure for his future wife.

It was not until he had fully resolved to go, that he mentioned the matter to Ellen Luce. She did not seem affected by the announcement. She showed no emotion whatever, and this, which would have utterly discouraged, and routed the purpose of an ordinary lover, produced no effect upon Daniel Heston.

When he resolved to do a thing he always did it. He lacked that subtle something, that sort of second-sight which we call tact. He was no chooser of times and places. And so, though he might have seen, and probably did, that his going away was a matter of total indifference to Ellen Luce, that made no difference with his purpose.

He told her he was going, and why he was going, and what hopes he had entertained, which made him anxious at once to try his fortunes. He told her that he loved her dearly, truly, and as he believed unalterably, and asked her to accept him as her future husband, or if she were not prepared to do that, to allow him to correspond with her by letter during his absence, and sometimes to come and visit her in her home.

Ellen was very much astonished at this. She knew that the "boy," as she always called him, had liked to visit at her home, and she had always supposed herself the attraction. But she had not, until now, given a serious thought to his attentions, and now—she did not wish to lose them, but she *despised* them, or rather the source from which they emanated.

But she had heard that Daniel Heston wrote very well, and fancying that his letters might be a source of amusement, she consented, without binding herself to aught else, to carry on a correspondence until his next visit.

If Daniel Heston had known a little more of the world he would have been able better to appreciate his position. But the thought of failure did not once occur to him. Nor did he care to question the motives of Miss Luce, nor to enquire into the probabilities of winning her love. He simply intended to do it, and he went home quite satisfied with the initiatory steps that he had taken.

He went away taking his intense love with him. He worked hard, perseveringly by day. By night he studied, or wrote out his heart in fiery letters to Ellen Luce, who showed them to her friends, and "made fun" of them to her own great amusement and their's. She answered his letters in pretty common-places, that Daniel accepted gratefully, having no standard whereby to measure their want of sincerity and of all that constitutes worth in human utterance.

Perfectly truthful, himself, and a novice in the world's ways, as in the study of the human heart, it was impossible that he could suspect guile. How could he, or any one, expect to find it hidden beneath that fair and graceful exterior?

Year after year rolled on. Daniel wrote weekly, or oftener, and as frequently as his business, which was fast becoming more absorbing and important, would permit, he paid a visit to his fair friend. More than once he spoke of marriage, but, though never quite refused, the question had been evaded, and its answer postponed from time to time till even Daniel's patience was almost exhausted.

He had seen more of the world, now, though but in its harsher aspects, for he had from the first so high an ideal of fidelity that he refused even to mingle in society, or to cultivate the acquaintance of other girls. His was a positive, firm, self-centred nature. Loving Ellen Luce, he believed that he belonged to her alone, and would have deemed himself false to his allegiance had he sought other female society. And this conduct he persevered in, though she had often requested him, when awakened to the seriousness of his pursuit, to test his attachment to her, by the trial of free intercourse with others. In the meantime she was, as ever, the light of her social circle, visiting, flirting, enjoying her small butterfly existence to the uttermost.

But patience and perseverence were almost sure to win, even in love. We have heard of such a curious procedure as marrying a suitor to get "rid of him." Perhaps this was the motive which led Ellen Luce to accept Daniel Heston at last. But we would rather believe that she loved him so much that the thought of losing him was painful to her, and that the great womanly need and desire for love met such complete satisfaction in his absorbing devotion, that she was quite content to forego the suffrages of society, and rest herself upon that alone.

But, be this as it may, Daniel Heston, resolved to bring matters to a crisis, had placed the alternative before her—"take me now, or let there be an end of all acquaintance," and she had consented to become his wife.

An ill-starred marriage, one would say, and truly, I think, for though marriages contracted under similar auspices sometimes result happily, such cases are but remarkable exceptions to a rule founded in reason and probability.

I think it an immutable law, that a woman must respect the man she marries, to ensure harmony or the outer semblance even of peace in the marriage state. Otherwise there is sure to be one tyrant in the family—that one whose will is strongest, whose nature is most exacting.

Ellen Heston looked upon her husband still as a "boy." She could not bring herself to realize that he had gained anything in maturity since she had known him first, and rightly felt herself his superior in many points. Then she was a few months older than he—she had the real superiority of age, and she was accustomed to the deference and consideration in society that a beautiful, sprightly, and well-bred girl is sure to receive.

Reasons enough, she probably thought, why the same deference should be extended to her in her new home.

But, as we have before intimated, Daniel Heston's was a very positive character. He had fixed views on nearly all subjects which had come under his observation, and he had a strong sense of personal dignity.

With such household elements there must inevitably be clashing, not for once, but for all time, since neither party would yield—the one because of fixed ideas of duty, a perhaps exaggerated sense of dignity, the other because an intense selfishness spurred on and aggravated the maddest manifestations of a temper of unusual violence.

Both were greatly at fault, as is doubtless always the case in domestic quarrels, for human nature, in its best manifestations, is terribly imperfect. Both were sometimes in the right, but oftener in the wrong, for evils of this nature perpetuate themselves. They engender mental states that ensure this perpetuation.

Daniel Heston did not care for society, but his wife's passionate love of it, her frantic complaints, sometimes drew him out of the shell he had formed about himself, and compelled him into scenes which he did not find so disagreeable as he had expected, and where he speedily found there were to be met women as beautiful, as charming in manner, and far more fascinating to a thoughtful man like himself, because their hearts and minds had received equal and generous culture, than the fair but giddy Ellen, whose superficial qualities had soon, in the intimacy of domestic life, become painfully apparent to him.

His allegiance was still firm where duty, if not love, must ever keep it. But he soon found that to converse with these, or in fact with any woman save herself, was a mortal crime in the eyes of Ellen, whose passion for admiration, carried always to the utmost extent consistent with propriety, was not content without the monopoly of every thought of the husband she despised.

With differences and difficulties so radical, all improvement in the condition of this ill-assorted pair is hopeless. Time and the real strength of his character, as well as talents, respectable if not of the highest order, have placed Daniel Heston in positions of trust and even eminence. The world looks upon him with respect. He is trusted, for he is known to be reliable, both in act and judgment. He has held high positions, denied to men far more brilliant and acute, and the community in which he lives claims him with just pride, as one of its valued members.

But his wife has never lost the old impression of his boyish inferiority. A poor, weak, frivolous creature herself, who has not made one advance in the road of improvement for many a year, but rather retrograded, as narrow selfishness must always do, she still rates herself far above her calm, firm, sensible, well-informed husband. As far as possible she has taught her children to despise him likewise, and, but for his own power of commanding respect, he would, perhaps, receive little in his household. As it is, he is but half the man he might have been in truer domestic relations, and the happiness of two lives has been destroyed by an ill-judged union, that deserves not the name of marriage.

The moral of this sketch of real life is obvious. As much judgment, discrimination, and wise forethought should enter into the choice of life-partners, as every, the most common mind, brings to bear upon the ordinary affairs of life, let them be of greater or lesser importance.

BLACK JOHNSON.

A GENUINE CHARACTER.

BY DR. S. COMPTON SMITH.

I was engaged, many years ago, in connection with an old friend, in stocking a sheep farm in Harrison county, Texas, and was on my way to the west to purchase a large flock of an old Mexican settler, with whom I had been in correspondence.

I journeyed along pleasantly enough till, on reaching a settlement on the upper Brazos, I was somewhat disturbed by the report of a hunting party of Kioways, who had followed the buffaloes into the range, through which my trail would lead me, my destination being the old "Spanish colony" on the Leon.

It was then that I was forcibly reminded of stories I had heard of the prowess of a famous hunter, called **Black Johnson**, who had often "wiped out" scores of enemies, single-handed, and who was the most terrible man in all that region of terrible men. It occurred to me that just then would be a capital time for me to fall in with Black Johnson, and have him for a travelling companion. But I had to push on alone.

I had passed the buffalo range in safety, and there was not an Indian, I supposed, within leagues of me, when one evening, being encampen on the narrow strip of timber skirting a small spring brook, my horse broke from his tether, and escaped from me into the open prairie. This made it necessary for me to leave my shelter in pursuit of him. I hadn't gone far when I heard a distant whoop, and scanning the wide plain, perceived five horsemen riding at a fast gallop towards me, and was startled at the discovery of their being Indians.

I lost no time in reaching the spot where I had left my rifle and pistols, and immediately proceeded to take such hasty measures for defence as I could.

Where I had made my bivouac, the stream formed a small curve, and ran deep between its banks. I instantly availed myself of this fortunate lay of the ground, and snatching up my weapons, took my position behind the bank, which reached above my breast, and awaited the approach of the savages.

It was not long before they were upon me. But ere they had discovered my position I had leveled my trusty rifle, and dropped the foremost Indian from his saddle. Seeing this, the other painted devils, letting fly a volley of arrows, dismounted from their beasts, and filling the little grove with mad yells, charged upon my hiding-place.

I had now nothing but my two single barreled pistols remaining, and no time to reload my rifle. But as the savages dashed toward me I gave them a shot from one of the pistols, and snatching up my rifle again, as if it contained a charge, leveled it upon them. This ruse checked them for an instant, and they sought the cover of the small growth, from which they directed their guns upon my shelter, waiting only for a sight of my head to fire.

Twice I drew their shots by the old artifice I had somewhere read of, of raising my hat upon the end of my rifle. But the cunning savages soon detected the cheat, and springing from tree to tree, pressed closer and closer upon me. They were extremely wary in their movements, however, and were careful not to expose any portion of their painted carcasses to my aim. It was at this point of the fight that I withdrew my empty rifle, and was hastily charging it, while my remaining pistol was deposited at hand upon the top of the bank, when I heard a cautious and stealthy tread along the bottom of the brook in my rear.

So startled was I at this unexpected addition to my enemies, that in my agitation I let the powder fall from the palm of my hand to the ground. I knew the four Indians were still in front of me in the thicket, for they could not have reached the stream unperceived by me.

Nearer and quicker approached the steps behind me, and I now was about to leap upon the bank, and giving up all as lost, throw myself upon the fire of the savages in front. I had sprung upon a decayed log for that purpose, when a powerful grasp was laid upon my shoulder, and I was borne to the ground.

Before I could perceive my new assailant, a voice whispered in my ear, "Keep down, stranger, or them are varmints 'll make daylight shine through yer brain-pan! I reckon you and I'll be good for them red cusses!"

And before I could recover from this sudden surprise, the new comer raised a long double-barreled rifle, and fired twice in quick succession, and I knew by the mingled yells of pain and rage that followed, that each shot had taken effect.

The next instant the stranger leaped past me up the bank, and was engaged in a hand to hand struggle with the two remaining savages.

He made short work of it, for before I could reach the spot he had them at his feet, and was in the act of stripping their paint-bedaubed scalps from their skulls. This done, he turned to the wounded savages he had shot from beneath the bank and served them in the same way, and then made a finish of them with his knife.

"I reckon, stranger, that 'ere other scalp of right belongs to you," said he, as he pointed with his dripping blade towards the body of the savage I had dispatched before his opportune arrival.

"Are there any more of the varmints about?" inquired my rescuer, as he deliberately proceeded to wipe out and recharge his rifle. "Here's one, two, three, four, five on 'em; is that all?"

"Yes," said I; "there were but five of them. And now, my friend, I must thank you for your timely aid, without which I am sure I should not now be among the living."

"What would yer thank me for, stranger? Why, it's my bis'ness to kill the red varmints! I've followed it all my life; and I reckon I'd rather do it than eat, any time. Cuss 'em! they wiped out my poor old father, and my only sister; and I owes 'em a grudge all thar scalps can't satisfy. I seed the varmints making a dash for the bottom here, and I knowed they wan't arter no good. I reckoned they'd scented you out—for I'd diskivered yer trail two days ago—and I knowed a lone traveller'd be sure to draw the varmints out; and so I followed arter yer."

I had now leisure to take a survey of my preserver. He was a singular looking individual, about middle-aged, with a tall, muscular person, which was clothed in a well greased and shiny suit of buckskin, that had evidently seen much rough service. About his waist was a broad leathern belt, in which were a couple of heavy cavalry pistols, a keen long-handled hatchet, and the scabbard of the heavy bowie he had just been using so skilfully. These, with his long two-barreled rifle, constituted a very efficient armament for one person to carry continually about him. To one unaccustomed to them they would have proved a rather heavy burden. But the stranger appeared not the least incommoded by their weight, and moved with all the lightness and grace of a young Indian warrior beneath his quiver of arrows.

In place of a hat the stranger wore on his head a sort of turban, made from folds of a piece of figured calico, which confining his sandy locks upon the top of his head, brought his bold and rather handsome features into strong relief. But the most attractive features about his face were a pair of large, prominent, gray eyes, that seemed to take in every object about him at a single glance. In their calm, yet penetrating gaze I can compare them to nothing but the eye of a half domesticated eagle.

Such was the appearance of this singular man, as with one foot resting upon the breast of the savage he had last scalped, he was leisurely recharging his weapons.

"I reckon, stranger," commenced my new companion, as he returned the last pistol to his belt, "yer'd better gather up yer traps, and jine me at my camp to-night; and in the morning we can ride in company—that is to say as if 'twould be agreeable to you."

I assured him that nothing could give me greater satisfaction.

"But," said I, "perhaps our trails don't run in the same direction."

"Where mought yer be bound?"

"To the 'Spanish Colony,'" I answered.

"Ah, that's fortunate! My trail runs through the same settlement. So we'll catch that runaway nag of yourn, and put out to my camp. It's but a little way from here, in this same creek bottom."

In another half hour we had arrived at his bivouac; and after a relishing supper of "hump" and marrow bones I spread my blanket, and was soon forgetful of the exciting incident of the day. Whether my companion slept or not I cannot say, for when I awoke at dawn I found he was already about, having changed the feeding places of our horses, and prepared a fragrant roast of buffalo flesh for an early breakfast. Partaking of the repast, we were soon on our way to the Leona, the belt of timber which skirted the river being distinctly visible from the swells of the prairie as we rode along.

I found my fellow traveller, though not very loquacious, a very sensible and pleasant companion. He was familiar with every foot of the ground over which we traveled, and said that he had camped on every water-course, river and spring branch, between the Red River of Louisiana and Mexico. But in all his conversation he never uttered an egotistical remark. His modesty was remarkable, and beyond what he had said of killing Indians after the skirmish at my camp, he made no reference to his ever before being engaged in a fight.

The sun had scarcely passed the meridian, when we came in sight of the settlement of the old Spanish colony, and my companion pointed out to me, in the edge of the river bottom, the thatched roofed rancho of old Don Pancho Diego, the Mexican with whom I had contracted for a thousand head of yearling ewes.

Soon we had passed the extensive *corrals*, in which large flocks of sheep were nightly driven, and rode up to the low porch of the Mexican's dwelling. No persons were moving about, and it was evident the occupants were enjoying their post-prandal siesta.

"*Buenos tardes, Amigos!*" (good evening, friends!) shouted my companion, and his voice aroused a pack of shaggy shepherd dogs, who, gathering from the numerous out-buildings, quickly called the peons and their master to the door.

"Down! down, dogs!" cried an old leather-clad Mexican, as he kicked the noisy animals from his path, and approached us, still rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

"Ah! is it you, my good, *good* friend, Don Tomas?" and the old man grasping the hand of my companion, who had not yet dismounted, covered it with kisses, expressing the utmost delight at seeing him.

While the Mexican still clung to the Texan's hand, an old matron rushed from the house, and with a cry of unbounded joy, seized upon my friend's other hand, and hugging his leg, gave vent to the most extravagant expressions of satisfaction. Nor were they satisfied with this demonstrative welcome, for when the Texan at length released himself from their embraces long enough to dismount, they again renewed the charge, and throwing themselves upon his neck, almost smothered him with their warm salutes.

After these transports were over, the Texan introduced me to the Mexican, and informed him that I was the Harrison county gentleman who had been in correspondence with him in relation to purchasing a flock of sheep.

I also received a kindly welcome, and peons taking our animals, we were led into the house.

"Ah, Don Tomas!" exclaimed the old lady, after we had been seated, "we are so happy to see you again."

And then, both she and her husband speaking together, commenced a long story, how the Texan had saved their lives a few years before, when their rancho had been attacked by a party of thieving Camanches. According to their account, he, with a small party of Rangers, had performed wonders of valor, for coming upon the settlement after the savages had already set fire to many of the ranches, he attacked more than ten times his own numbers, and slaying more than half of them, saved the lives of the entire settlement, since which the Indians had not ventured to return.

During this recital, I observed my companion sat uneasily on his chair, and seemed impatient of his own praises.

"Tut, tut, my good friends, you lay it on too thick!" said he, as they concluded their earnest tale. "Yer see, stranger, I and some of the boys happened along here a few years ago, when we discovered a party of redskins plundering the ranches, and what could we do but drive 'em off, that's all. To be sure 'twas a pretty warm fight, and some of the boys got hurt, but after all 'twa'n't nothing to brag on."

"And he saved my life yesterday," said I to the Mexicans; and then I repeated the occurrence of the previous day, adding that I had not yet even learned the name of my gallant preserver.

"You cannot have been long in Texas," said Don Pancho, "if you have not heard the name of Thomas Johnson, usually called Black Johnson. Then let me introduce you, gentlemen."

"Black Johnson!" I repeated. "Oh, yes; I have indeed heard his name before." And then came freshly to mind the anecdotes I had heard of this brave Texan, on that night when confined by a "norther" to the reeking bar-room of that "tavern."

It has been finely observed that "Men sacrifice others! women themselves!"

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Never forget what a man has said to you in anger. If he has charged you with anything, you had better look it up. Anger is a bow that will shoot sometimes where another feeling will not.

Writing is a good recipe for melancholy. Luther drove the devil away by throwing his inkstand at him, and an inkstand may put the blue devils to flight.

A man in a state of hot-brained nervousness is burning up. He is like a candle in a hot candlestick, burning off at one end and melting down at the other.

The disciples found angels at the grave of Him they loved; and we should always find them too, but that our eyes are too full of tears for seeing.

True aiming in life is like true aiming in marksmanship. We always look at the fore-sight of a rifle through the hind-sight.

Fame, they tell us, is air; but without air there is no life for any—without fame there is none for the best.

Tyrants can generally learn no lesson of humanity, unless it is written broadly with the point of the sword.

The elements of human happiness are love to God and man, love to one woman, and the possession of a *good* hired girl.

If a nervous man is an anatomist, his fancy will locate every pain in the worst part of his whole mechanism.

A bold strong man is not satisfied to watch the movements of fortune's wheel. He grasps it and turns it round to suit himself.

Scrutinize a lawyer when he tells you how to avoid litigation, and a doctor when he drinks your health.

It is quite as well for children that parents should hate them as love them with a foolish and ever-indulgent love.

Those fondest of finding fault are pretty sure to find a great many faults and to appropriate the whole of them.

Political and literary institutions should be founded on Christianity, not Christianity on them.

Wars drive up riches in heaps, as winds drive up snows, making and concealing many abysses.

Political men, like goats, usually thrive best among inequalities.

Love of supremacy, miscalled political glory, finds most men dishonest, and leaves all so.

If you see a ghost, take to your heels. He can't catch you, he being the dead, and you the quick.

He who will break his last loaf with you, but never his faith, is a true friend.

Glory is all very well, but even the weakest of our species show how easy it is to do without it.

Afflictions are salutary. To yield its best fruits, the soul, like the soil, must be harrowed.

Cruelty is no more the cure of crimes than it is the cure of sufferings; compassion is good for both.

All the lazy men about town are no better than fugitives from labor.

Be sure to pay for your pantaloons. Don't get yourself charged with breeches of trust.

Call for three trout at dinner, and you will be sure to have an odd fish at the table.

If books were bought and sold as readily as most authors of books, how brisk the trade would be.

Women love to exercise control; they are not satisfied unless they have husbands *to order*.

To keep warm in a cold day, women double the *cape*, and men double the *horn*.

More law-suits than love-suits are brought on by *attachments*.

Almost every evil has its compensation. He who has but one foot never treads on his own toes.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A man recently discharged from Sing Sing, where he has served out a long term of imprisonment, is doing a brisk business in defrauding confiding women, whose dresses and other garments he obtains for the purpose of dyeing them, and then converts them to his own use. He has a neat card, and a glib address, and usually makes those on whom he calls believe him to be an honest and deserving man. In large cities, ladies should not put their trust in strangers who apply at their doors for work.

An officer of one of the New York volunteer regiments, on coming home on a visit recently, found his mother and friends making arrangements for his funeral ceremonies, they having telegraphed to the colonel of his regiment *to send on his corpse*. Of course, his appearance occasioned a stunning surprise, to say nothing of the joy it gave rise to. How it was that his mother got the idea that he was dead neither she nor anybody else could clearly say.

A Frenchman, while eating some plums for a dessert at dinner, got hold of one into which a wasp had crawled through a slit; and on putting it in his mouth and pressing it with his teeth, the wasp crawled out and stung him in the palate, which immediately began to swell rapidly, and in spite of all the skill that could be brought to bear in his favor, the unfortunate man died in less than three hours from suffocation.

A man confined in the Tombs on a charge of highway robbery, lately threw himself from the third tier of cells to the stone floor, thirty-five feet below, with the intention of striking on his head and so killing himself; but to his great grief he came down upon his feet, and only broke one ankle and one wrist, and sustained some internal injuries.

A lady living in Williamsburg, while sitting near a stove the other evening, somehow set fire to her clothes, and they blazing up all at once, she was immediately enveloped in flames and burned to death, and her husband, who frantically tried to extinguish the flames, was also burnt so badly that fears were entertained for his life.

A little boy four years old, whose parents live in Rivington street, fell down the front stone steps, on which he was playing, one morning recently, and his head striking violently on the flagging of the sidewalk, his skull was fractured, and he died in the course of the day.

A young man, while going a gunning recently, and being in a boat with his companions, in attempting to take his gun from the bottom of the boat, seized it by the muzzle, and in drawing it towards him, it was discharged, and the contents entering his breast, inflicted a wound from which he died in the course of two hours.

A young man, about seventeen years of age, was arrested one day lately, for stealing a gold watch and a large sum of money, in gold, from the trunk of a fellow-boarder who roomed with him. The watch and money were found on him, and he was committed to the Tombs to await his trial.

A couple of women hid a child, fifteen months old, behind some barrels in Washington street, one evening lately, and then ran off and left it. A policeman who had noticed their actions, supposing something to be wrong, found the child, and then hunted down the women, who were arrested and sent to the Tombs.

A couple, each over sixty-five years of age, living in this city, lately got into a quarrel; the husband struck his wife a blow in the eye with a stick; she retaliated by knocking him down with a poker, and his head striking against the stove as he fell, he received a mortal injury, and died in a few hours.

As a number of persons were attempting to cross the Platte river, on a raft, (the bridge having been carried away by a freshet,) it capsized, and two women and six children, the wives and offspring of soldiers of the Utah army, were drowned.

A well-dressed rogue was detected the other afternoon in picking the pocket of a gentleman who was looking at some engravings in a window in Nassau street, and taken before a Police Justice, who committed him for trial.

A magnetic hammer has been invented in Germany, which takes tacks and nails by the head and holds them until they are driven into the wood far enough to stand alone, whereby all thumping of fingers is avoided.

The astronomer of the Hayes' Arctic Expedition, in search of the northwest passage, was frozen to death on his sledge while out exploring, accompanied by a single Esquimaux.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1861.

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THE TELEGRAPH AND THE TRAIN.

We are now in communication, by telegraph, with Salt Lake City, in Utah. Our morning papers contain dispatches thence dated on the previous day, and by the time these words appear in print, the entire Pacific line will probably have been completed, and information exchanged by lightning between San Francisco and New York.

The next grand conquest over time and space in that direction will be achieved by the construction of a Pacific Railroad, which will place the two cities nearer to each other, chronometrically, than New York was to Savannah at the close of the Revolution. Sooner or later such a road is sure to be built, and in all probability a quarter of a century hence, no two points of the territory now comprised within the Union will be more than six or eight days from each by steam, and as many minutes by lightning.

And yet in the face of these certainties, for we hold them to be such, men in England who are called philosophers and statesmen insist that the republic is too large to remain intact. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, a believer in spiritualism, mesmerism, and all sorts of supernaturalism, is quite certain that the United States will be split up into at least four separate nations. He foresaw some years ago, according to his own account, that such a breaking up of the Union must necessarily take place, but whether he obtained his information, so important if true, while in a state of trance or from prescient chairs and tables, he does not specify. Other English notabilities, heretofore supposed to be intelligent, and not known to be under the influence of wizards and hobgoblins, sing pretty much the same tune, though they do not pitch it quite so high as Sir Bulwer Lytton, the dreamer of wonderful dreams.

In view of the fact that the *time* between remote points of the Union diminishes as its boundaries are extended, it is amazing that men of common sense should indulge in such stupid drivel. The extremities of the United States are *practically* nearer to each other now than they were in 1783, when the confederacy consisted of thirteen members instead of thirty-four. It is the merest twattle to talk of the Union breaking down because of its size, when science is bringing the ends of the earth together. At the very time when these English wiseacres are predicting the segregation of the republic as the legitimate and logical consequence of its vast extent, we are linking the Atlantic to the Pacific slope, and an overland thought-line is about to be constructed by Russia, which, in conjunction with the lines already completed, will encompass the world.

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AMERICAN LADIES LIBELLED.

One Kohl, a German traveller, has recently published a critical treatise on the personal appearance, manners and general course of life, of American Young Ladies. Should he ever visit this country again he had better wear his hair *a la Zouave*, and keep a bright lookout for those flexible little instruments made of raw hide, with which high spirited daughters of Columbia now and then respond to ungentlemanly impertinence. He accuses the "great majority of women" in this country of having insipidly pretty faces, unclassical busts, unshapely waists and meagre limbs; of taking little or no exercise and spending their time after the fashion of ladies in Eastern harems, on softly cushioned sofas and in rocking chairs; of drinking vinegar "to develop the moonlight on their faces;" of being tender, delicate, capricious, fashionable puppets; of scouting the interference of parental authority in their love affairs and flirtations; of cajoling, snubbing, eclipsing and henpecking the other sex; of being "unluckily" fond of attending scientific and other lectures, "where they do themselves no good;" of exhibiting their genius as authors by constantly "pouring fresh water on the old tea leaves of literature, and swamping the book market with a fearfully insipid beverage;" and of other positive and negative faults too numerous to recapitulate. From this sweeping libel on what he calls the "American Crinoline Cohort," he only specially excepts the female population of a portion of New England, whom he pats condescendingly on the back, and admits to be most "respectable, pious and domesticated." What an abominable fellow!

We suspect that Herr Kohl was not popular with our countrywomen during his sojourn among us. He writes very much as if the "American Crinoline Cohort" had given him the cold shoulder. Manifestly he is a brute. And yet what he says about our young ladies being afraid of exercise and too fond of lolling in rocking chairs, *may* have *some* foundation in fact.

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THE WORK-OR-BREAD CRY.

The English papers inform their readers that, in addition to civil war, we have in our midst another fearful evil—gangs of gaunt and hungry men going about our streets and hoarsely crying, "*Give us work or give us bread!*" John Bull is easily taken in, and he probably believes this of a city which never looked brighter, and was seldom more cheerful or more busy than during the last few months. Besides, there are not one hundred American mechanics in the city of New York who do not as clearly see the fallacy of the Work-or-Bread system as the best philosopher in England. The American mechanic expects *to earn his own living, and asks no favors of anybody*. In good times he puts away two or three dollars a week as a resource against seasons when work shall be scarce. And even should he get a "little short" in dull seasons, he would, as a general thing, rather go without work and bread both than beg for either. In real, downright manliness of nature, an American mechanic is equal to a European nobleman, and in some cases superior.

But on the other side of the Atlantic things are ordered differently. Late arrivals from Europe inform us that, owing to the falling off of American orders for silk goods, forty thousand silk weavers are out of employment at Lyons, *for whom Louis Napoleon was about to open workshops at the public expense.* Precisely so. *That is the price which the French mechanics receive for their liberty.* Self-respecting freemen would disdain the proposition.

Do the European governments find it convenient to have the doctrine thus promulgated at their very doors, that governments must always be prepared to avert from improvident workmen the just consequences of their improvidence? Does Europe really desire to reduce citizens into serfs, and throw back grown men into the dependent condition of children? Why is England silent at the spectacle of this gigantic and corrupting Socialism, and reserve all her wrath for an imaginary Socialism in New York?

Besides, the Lyons Socialistic workshops cannot last. The French government has been spending from ten to twenty millions a year in excess of its income, and this excess has been spent in making labor abundant. Paris has been rebuilt that masons might be employed. But pay-day must come at last. And when it does come, what is to be done with a hungry population who have been systematically taught *not* to provide for a rainy day?

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THE CENTRAL PARK---ONE CENT REWARD!

The Commissioners of the Central Park have established a rule—and a very proper one—that there shall be no fast driving within the Park, and limiting the speed of vehicles to six miles an hour. This is all very well, or rather it would be very well, if the police were judges of the rate of speed, and could tell a six-mile an hour gait from a five-mile one, or a seven-mile one. But some of them are utterly incompetent to judge of the matter at all, and by their officious intermeddling with ladies and gentlemen driving *within* the permitted rate of speed, they render riding in the Park anything but a pleasure. We are as much opposed to fast driving in the Park as any one; in fact, no man who owns good horses, would think of such a thing as driving them faster than a jog on the *hard roads* of the Park. There are, however, some persons who own horses that they do not consider valuable, and still others who hire horses at livery stables, who would be reckless enough to drive at a dangerous rate of speed, if there were no rule regulating it. But some of the policemen while strutting in the "little brief authority" with which they have been clothed, succeed in making themselves ridiculous. They sometimes in a very offensive manner stop private carriages containing ladies; and they even interfere with children, trotting their little ponies along the Park drives. Our own boys have been thus meddled with, when driving a small pony, hardly bigger than a Newfoundland dog, before a little wagon that it could not possibly draw at a rate which would render it dangerous even to the slowest policeman's corns, and this, too, when no other vehicle was in sight or hearing.

We have tried to obtain the name of the officious policeman referred to; but failing to do so, we hereby offer the above reward for his cognomen. It is proper to add that after he stopped the pony, and threatened to impose a fine, several gentlemen drove up and ridiculed him so that he was glad to sneak away.

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FINDING FAULT WITH COMMANDING GENERALS AN OLD CUSTOM.

There are not many things easier to do than to find fault. The fault-finding line of business requires no capital of brains, culture, capacity or experience; all that is wanted is a lack of all these, and a plentiful supply of ignorance, conceit, and ill-nature. When Wellington was fighting his way through Portugal and Spain, beer-muddled cockneys at home found it easy to grumble at every little reverse of his arms and to show "'ow it might 'ave been awoided, you know." When, during the darkest days of the Revolution, Washington was carrying in his steadfast and invincible heart the despairing hopes of the infant republic, and the British were gaining advantages here, there, and everywhere, it was an easy thing for stay-at-home grumblers to find fault with the great chieftain; and they voraciously improved their opportunities, and some of the most blatant even talked of having another put in his place. So it has always been, and thus it probably will ever be; meanness and cowardice are always ready to manifest themselves through fault-finding and detraction. On the other hand, goodness of heart, greatness of soul, and sovereignty of intellect are always magnanimous, and though eagle-eyed and lion-hearted they are *beneficently just*, and never asperse the motives or carp at the actions of those who, whatever success or failure may attend their efforts, strive to *do their best in their country's cause.*

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THE THREE CAMP DISEASES.

Soldiers in camp suffer from three diseases; diarrhea, rheumatism and fever. The commonest cause of diarrhea is bad water; its cure, complete rest, and abstinence from every kind of food except plain boiled rice. All ordinary cases will yield to this treatment in twenty-four hours, or less. Rheumatism is usually brought on, not by getting wet, but by remaining in wet clothes. Hard drinkers are particularly liable to bad attacks. To avoid rheumatism, keep dry, wear flannel, and keep the digestion sound. Fevers are generally caught after dark in the open air. A man going out on night duty should never go hungry, and never stand still longer than necessary. Good food and active exercise will generally keep a man well unless the air is uncommonly deleterious. To cure a case of not very severe fever, nothing seems so efficacious as a change of air. It is said that the removal of a patient only a few miles often works an immediate improvement in his condition. In scouting along the edge of a swamp at night, there is no danger so long as the party keeps on the windward side of it. These doctrines are laid down in the writings of army surgeons and of physicians who have given much attention to the subjects discussed, and ought therefore to be trustworthy.

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WHAT EUROPE OWES TO AMERICAN INVENTORS.

If the debtor and creditor account between America and the rest of the world, so far as it relates to important inventions, were fairly audited, the balance would be found enormously in favor of America. What equivalent has Europe ever given us for the labor-saving inventions of American origin which have exercised such a vast influence in the extension of her commerce and the promotion of her agricultural and manufacturing interests. Steamboats—the cotton gin—the electric telegraph—clipper ships—lightning presses—revolving firearms—"india rubber goods" of kinds innumerable—sewing machines—mechanical reapers and mowers—are among the great boons we have bestowed upon mankind within the last sixty years or so. The entire list would occupy columns. We have enumerated only a few of the most prominent items. Time and space are said to be annihilated, and the figure scarcely transcends the fact. Who taught the world to annihilate them? Morse—an American; and even the presses with which the London Times prints its abuse of our institutions and its exultant predictions of our downfall, were invented by an American.

STORMING THE BASTILE.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

In the year 1789 there stood, at the eastern entrance gate of Paris, the world-renowned fortress and prison called the Bastile. The massive pile of rock and iron was surmounted by eight towers, which darkened the air with their gothic gloom. The vast building was surrounded by a wall of stone nine feet in thickness and one hundred feet high. The whole was encircled by a ditch twenty-five feet deep and one hundred and twenty feet wide.

The Bastile was universally regarded with terror. It was the most dreadful instrument of punishment which despotic power could wield. There were few hearts sufficiently bold to brave its menace. Imagination can scarcely conceive any abode more loathsome than the dens of the Bastile. The stone walls were slimy with the damp and mould of ages. The floors swarmed with all those reptiles who seek darkness and mire. The most favored of these cells admitted a few rays of light through a narrow slit in the wall. Ponderous double doors, seven inches thick, and provided with enormous locks and bolts, shut the captive as effectually from the world as if he were in his grave.

There were vaults in this horrible prison called *oubliettes*, where the victim was dropped into oblivion. They were sunk into the ground beneath the vaults of the Bastile, shaped like a bottle, with a narrow neck and expanding beneath. Into these tombs of massive stone, twenty-two feet deep and about eighteen in diameter, the victim of despotic jealousy was thrust, where he was left in Egyptian darkness, with reptiles and mire, crushing beneath his tread the bones of those who had perished before him. Sometimes the doomed man was left to all the horrors of immediate starvation. Sometimes coarse food was daily thrown down to the wretched captive, and he dragged out an existence of weary years until death came slowly to his relief.

A gentleman by the name of Dessault, for refusing to obey an iniquitous command of Richelieu, was thrust into one of these oubliettes, where he passed *sixty-one years!* His family never knew what became of him, as he was dragged from them at midnight.

"Oh, who can tell what days, what nights he spent
Of tideless, waveless, sailless, shoreless woe?"

All this he endured as a punishment for his *virtue*. The mind is appalled by the contemplation of such woes. The terrors of the Bastile frowned down all remonstrance against the profligate government of France. If any one was but suspected of disaffection he was seized by the secret police, and plunged into the dungeon where he was lost forever, as much as if he were in his grave. During the long reign of Louis XV., one hundred and fifty thousand victims were consigned to the Bastiles of France.

One of the first acts of the French Revolution was to seize upon this execrable fortress and raze it to its foundations.

"Our fathers," says Michelet, "shivered that Bastile to pieces, tore away its stones with bleeding hands, and flung them afar. Afterwards they seized them again, and having hewn them into a different form, in order that they might be trampled under foot by the people forever, built with them the bridge of Revolution."

De Launey was governor of the Bastile, a detestable man, who contrived to extort, through the energies which he wielded in the fortress, an income of twenty-five thousand dollars a year. As the people of Paris rose against that atrocious government which had so long defrauded them of all their rights, it was manifest that one of the most essential measures was to capture the Bastile. The terrible fortress, bristling with guns, commanded the city, and could throw its heavy shot into almost any of the streets. But how could the Bastile be taken? In its massive strength of iron and stone, well garrisoned and amply supplied with the munitions of war, it was apparently impregnable. Nothing could seem more preposterous than for a Parisian mob to undertake the storming of the Bastile.

"The idea," says Michelet, "was by no means reasonable. It was an act of faith."

The people had not even any muskets. There was, however, a large supply at the Hotel of the Invalides. The alarm bells rang from every steeple, and thirty thousand men, mostly unarmed, but utterly desperate, soon surrounded the great arsenal. The governor of the Invalides had loaded his cannon to the muzzle with grape, and could easily have swept down the assailants by thousands; but shocked at the idea of so terrible a slaughter, he did not venture to give the command to fire. The multitude, in a simultaneous rush, leaped the trenches, clambered the low wall, for the Hotel was not a fortress, and, like an inundation, penetrated every nook and corner of the building.

Seizing thirty thousand muskets, and six pieces of light artillery, they rushed to assail that mountain of rock, frowning with the heaviest guns, which, not many years before, an army, under the great Conde, had besieged in vain for three and twenty days.

De Launey from one of the towers heard the roar of the insurgent city, and saw the agitated mass of countless thousands approaching through all the streets. The cannon, loaded with grape, were thrust from the port-holes, and cart-loads of paving stones, cannon-balls and old iron had been conveyed to the top of the towers, to hurl down upon the assailants.

The people, who had organized a rude sort of government at the Hotel de Ville, sent a flag of truce, summoning the governor to surrender, "in the name of the people, of honor, and of our native land."

De Launey declined to surrender, but replied that he was ready to declare upon oath that he would not fire upon the people unless assailed. The flag had hardly emerged from the massive portals and crossed the draw-bridge of the moat, which was immediately raised, ere the attack was commenced. The walls, forty feet thick at the base, and ten feet thick at the top of the towers, could laugh at cannon-balls. The garrison, through loop-holes of double and triple gratings, were secure from all danger, while every shot they sent might make sure of its mark. Against these walls, one hundred feet high, more than one hundred thousand men, hour after hour, harmlessly flattened their bullets.

Fortunately for the people, the garrison in the fortress were generally in such strong sympathy with them, that they were careful to do as little harm as possible. The Swiss mercenaries, however, in blind obedience to orders, fired with unerring aim. The whole population of Paris seemed to be combined against this great bulwark of despotism. There were not a few nobles and priests who espoused the popular cause, and they were seen fighting side by side with the gaunt and ragged victims of famine.

As the impotent assault continued hour after hour, producing not the slightest impression, a few thousand royal troops, called the French Guards, broke from their officers, and led by a subaltern, joined the people, bringing with them two pieces of artillery. They were received with shouts, which rose loud and long above even the thunders of the battle. They opened their battery, but the balls rebounded harmless from the impregnable rock.

The afternoon was now wearing away. But one individual within the fortress had been injured by a chance shot. One hundred and seventy-one of the assailants had been either killed or wounded. The garrison consisted of eighty French, and thirty Swiss soldiers. The French soldiers were in sympathy with their brethren in the streets, and at length openly revolted, dragging down the Bourbon flag, and raising upon their bayonets handkerchiefs and towels in token of surrender. Gradually these white flags were discerned through the clouds of smoke that enveloped the prison, and the cry was echoed through the thronged streets, "The Bastile surrenders."

De Launey conscious that he could expect no mercy from the people, whose blood he had been shedding so profusely, seized a match and rushed towards the magazine. There were one hundred and thirty-five barrels of gunpowder in the vaults. The explosion would have buried one hundred thousand people beneath the ruins of the Bastile, and have demolished one-third of Paris. Two soldiers seized the frantic governor and bound him.

The portals were thrown open, and the throng rushed in. They clambered the towers, penetrated the cells, and with lanterns groped through the glooms of dungeons and oubliettes. With awe-stricken spirits they gazed upon the instruments of torture with which the victims had been torn and broken.

The moderation of the people, in this hour of frenzy and yet of triumph, seems marvelous. Instead of devoting the Swiss, who had shot down nearly two hundred of their number, to indiscriminate massacre, but one of them was injured. Seizing the governor and the Swiss troops, and carefully endeavoring to protect them from violence, in a tumultuous throng, which could not be counted, they were endeavoring to conduct their prisoners to the Hotel de Ville for trial. There were a few in this vast throng burning for vengeance. They at length succeeded in overpowering the guard of De Launey, struck him to the ground, cut off his head, and raised the ghastly trophy into the air upon a pike. Two of the Swiss guard were also hung upon a lamp-post. But the French guard who had been co-operating with the people marched promptly to the rescue. They took the whole garrison, French and Swiss, under their protection, and marched them to their barracks. Thus terminated this ever memorable day in the annals of France. It was the 14th of July, 1789.

The fall of the Bastile caused a shout of exultation to roll over the whole domain of France. The working clergy were with the people, and thanks were returned to God in all the churches. Notre Dame was crowded to its utmost capacity on the occasion. The Abbe Fauchet preached a sermon of such surpassing eloquence, that its echoes still resound through France. His text was, "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty."

"False interpreters of Scripture," said the Abbe, "have wished, in the name of Heaven, to keep the people in subjection to their masters. They have consecrated despotism. They have rendered God an accomplice with tyrants. These false teachers exult because it is written, '*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.*' But that which is not Cæsar's—is it necessary to render to him that? And *Liberty* does not belong to Cæsar. It belongs to human nature."

This eloquent enunciator of the politics of the gospel of Christ, was greeted with the loudest plaudits. A civic crown was placed upon his brow, and he was escorted home with the waving of banners, the peal of bugles, the ringing of bells, and the acclamations of the crowds who thronged the streets.

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"OR ANY THING THAT IS HIS."

How is one to help coveting when one goes into a nice picture-gallery, where an artistic light brings out every masterly touch, with most thrilling effect. How is one to help saying, oh if I had but this, or that, or that, even to the tune of thousands or so! For my own part, I have made more vows and broken them about visiting these picture haunts, than most offenders, and still, I can no more help going, than a country-boy can help bird-nesting on a holiday afternoon. There are some pictures, like some faces, that your heart reflects forever, though you may only have seen them once. Pictures that come up to you, as you lie awake nights—if you are given, like me, to that sort of thing—as vividly as if at the moment really before you. Perhaps another person would not be impressed at all as you were; for all that it speaks to you, like some books which another rejects, or passes by; for there is no rule about such things, nor can one's likings or dislikings in these art matters, come and go to order. That Prof. Astute sets everybody down an idiot, who has not read his gradual progress of bugdom from the first insect in Eden down to the Croton-bug of the present day, will never make me wade through nine volumes of bug-ology to save my reputation. That a "professed critic" might raise his eyebrows because I did not make my orisons before some dingy "old master," would never loosen my knee joints. In short, if a picture, or a book, or a statue, or music, has any message for me, I know it will say it, as soon as I see or hear it, and failing in this, all that a bystander could say, pro or con, would not weigh a feather. But when I *do* like a thing. Great Cæsar! *how* I like it! and that you see makes it so tough for me, when I stumble against that covet-ing commandment. **Fanny Fern.**

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HOW ARE BULLETS MADE?

Des Moines, *Iowa, October 19th*, 1861.

Editor of the Ledger—*Dear Sir:*—We have a very flourishing Mechanics' Association here. It is about twelve years old, and has become one of the permanent institutions of our State. We have a scientific lecture once a month, upon whatever the institution thinks most important to the times, and for this lecture we generally send abroad for a man of known skill and ability. Our association is similar to the Polytechnic Association of the American Institute in New York city. We despise the clap-traps and little humbugs usually tolerated in country associations of the kind. We regularly bind and file away twenty-two volumes of newspapers, among which the Ledger takes place for its high-toned literature.

Our whole body is at a loss as to the manner that the government manufactures bullets for the army. We are anxious to know something of the machinery used, and how many can be made in a certain time (a day, for instance) by a single machine, and how many men it requires to keep it in operation. Also, the proportion of round balls and slugs and Minnié balls used at present, and the mode of making the Minnié balls; how deep the cavities in the ends are, and whether government manufactures its own balls, or lets them out by contract? We are entirely in the dark on this important subject. Any light you can give us touching the matter will be thankfully received and filed away as invaluable, undoubted fact.

Very respectfully yours,
H. M. N. De Vane, Secretary.

[We cannot fully explain the bullet-making process, as requested by our correspondent, and would be glad if some person who is thoroughly posted in the business would send us a brief article on the subject.—Ed. Ledger.]

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.---No. 95.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

MY PICTURE GALLERY.

I have seen the principal galleries of pictures in American cities; and a few of the eminent collections in London and Paris. It may seem to some like vain and foolish boasting, to say that I have a collection of pictures far surpassing any at home or abroad. Yet, I conscientiously affirm it. Of course, it would be the vice of a curmudgeon, to shut up such a collection. I keep it open thro' the day, and often far into night. No fee is charged for admission. Entrance is permitted at all times—even when a new arrangement of pictures is going on: for I have so many pictures that all cannot be exhibited at once, and every day I make some fresh dispositions. Although figure pieces largely outnumber all others, yet, there are admirable sea-pieces, ships, bits of landscape, fine cloud effects, very well executed trees, fruit pieces, animals of many kinds, true to life. There has been great pains taken with costume. It would be difficult to find any disposition of cloth from the out-blossoming of a beggar's coat, to the heavy folds of velvet and satin, or the fine plaits of linen and lace, that I have not on exhibition. Will you walk with me and take a mere cursory view?

Let us go out the front door into the street. There! see that sad face coming. The artist undertook to depict the expression of one who had been well bred, whose thoughts and feelings were refined, who had for years passed from reverse to reverse; by turns sickness, or watchings for the sick; poverty, without sordidness; neglect of friends borne without bitterness of spirit; and at length, age with sharp ills, that cripple the limbs and make walking a slow torture. See how gentle, and even tranquil the face is! Good cheer, patience, and divine trust, overlay the sharp features, as gold is put along salient edges of great rooms, to catch the light, and take away a sense of heaviness and gloom. *Frère* never painted such a head. It is a noble study,—within and without!

Just beyond, and in admirable contrast, see that group of little girls. There are six of them. The eldest is ten years old. They are full of life and motion. Just a shade of consciousness is falling upon them, but no regulated vanity, as yet. Their hair was well brushed, but the wind has been brushing it again, as it does leaves and tall grass, into the beauty of negligence. Their cheeks are flushed with running. Would you see how sweet and loving they are? Let us walk along past them. Here they come, running free, eager, without rudeness. They seize me by my hands, by my arms, by my skirts. They look up with pretty questions in their mouths and innocence in their eyes, while one or two, less acquainted or more shy, hang just on the edge of the group, wistful but unventuresome. I never tire of this picture. And such has been the matchless skill of the artist that it never looks to me twice alike.

Walk on. Look down at your feet. Do you see those exquisite effects? The shadows of leaves and branches are cast upon a golden ground of sunlight, and, most wonderful in a picture, they *move*. These long films of shade that shift hither and thither are willow spray. They seem like shadows of spirits. How unlike the rigid forms, and positive motion of the leaves of the linden, or fern-leaved ailanthus, that much abused, beautiful tree. This is an endless picture. Walk where you may, and as long as you will, and filmy shadows mottled with gold, move in a dreamy maze upon the cold gray stones. We *walk* on pictures. The most delicate etchings, the most exquisite pencil sketches, cannot compare with these leagues of frescoes under foot.

Stop. Look up at that window. Set as in frame is a child's face, looking for some expected father, and just behind the young mother. They do not know what a rare picture they form. Neither do others. For, while half behind a tree, to shield my curiosity and interest, I look at them, and at the passers-by, scarcely one looks up, and then but a single glance; and yet Reynolds never composed so sweet a figure, in such exquisite color, with such beautiful expression. Notice by the curbstone yonder that German woman with a cart drawn in part by two dogs. The hand-cart is full of half-burnt coal and cinders. What grizzly dogs, fierce and harsh to every strange comer; but how lovingly do they spring and tug to reach their mistress as she comes out, dusty, grimed, weather-tanned, with her fragments of fuel! And she! Five hundred people will go past her, and she will not know it. She is as separate from this crowd of life as if she were a carved stone, or a growing tree. Her thoughts and theirs have no more acquaintance than have the birds in the air with the fish in the sea. And yet there is a voice at home that will call out to her, and with strange resurrection, up from this hard exterior will come the glow, the love, the yearning sympathy of motherhood! In the streets, dogs, dirt and woman: in the house, mother and babe! and the difference is that of before and after resurrection!

Here go the misses to school! In twos and threes the street is lighted up with faces and beautiful colors! If I were a rich man, I would build a mansion, and have never less than a thousand children under care. To pass the age of twelve, should be the fault for which expulsion should be visited. But there falls a broad shadow on the street. Look up. It is one of those unfolding banks of white, full of lines and cinctures of gray. Is it a tabernacle holding spirits within? Or is it some island floated off from ethereal realms? Or is this a caravan such as move through the highways of the air, freighted with treasures to some provincial star, in which odors and essences have given out? The shadow moves slowly down the street, colors fade out, the tracing of leaves on the path is effaced, grays gain ground and white vanishes, until that yellow flood behind, following close, pours the tide of sunlight again on all the street!

There moves a funeral—twenty carriages; and except in the first, all seem to take a cheerful view of death—in others. The sexton and undertaker is in his glory. He rides in front as if he returned in triumph from the war. To him death means fees, gloves, scarfs, and spectacle arranged in the very best taste for grief. Vanity and money go up to the very gates of immortality. The doctor had professional curiosity in the act of death; the nurse is vain of the number whom she has laid out, and this is only one more! The man that made the coffin is vain of the work; the sexton is vain of the whole job; the grave-digger looks with complacent eye on the grave, dug, he assures you, better and in half the time, of any other operator in that line. There was much meaning in the apostle's sentence, "It is sown in corruption and in dishonor and in darkness."

Here comes a nurse with a plump babe in a little carriage—another sort of procession, from death to life, this is going. Five steps behind, the young mother, herself fair and but a girl; yet, would you please her? Look at her child, and look again.

But you grow tired of looking at Pictures? Well, it is tiresome. There are too many for once. Let's go back, forget what we have seen, look on some paint and canvas, and be filled with enthusiasm! For men admire men and their works more than God and his works. It is but a part of human egotism.

PROGRESS.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"First the blade,—then the ear,—then the ripe corn."
St. Mark.

"I've found you out," said the rain-drop
To a tiny grain of wheat,—
"Did you think you were buried up, and dead,
Forevermore, in your darksome bed?
Come forth to the light, my sweet."

Then it opened its eyes like a baby,
And turn'd in its cradle small,
And drank the draught to its lips that prest
And felt strange vigor inspire its breast,
As a steed at the trumpet call.

Then forth crept a spider-like fibre,
And a filament root took hold,
And a tender, tremulous shoot was seen,—
While a wiry stem with its banner green
Transpierc'd the cleaving mould.

So, freed from a stranger's terror,
Its fresh blade flourish'd high,—
And anon the ripening sheaf came in,
With manhood's beard around its chin,
Gladdening the reaper's eye!

Even thus, the span-long infant,
Expands to five feet ten,—
And he who knew but to pine and cry,
Uplifts the sword of the warrior high,
And leads embattled men.

For little by little, while here below,
Our greatest works are done,—
And stone by stone, with progress slow,
Tower, castle, and cathedral grow
And the pyramid meets the sun.

From the humble basis of A B C,
The dome of Learning ascends,
Where the princes of science in dignity meet,
And the crown'd philosopher takes his seat,
While the world in homage bends.

Hartford, Conn., October 5th, 1861.

VASCO PERES,
THE COOPER OF ALCOBAÇA.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

CHAPTER V.

"Where drums beat laws are dumb."

That night Elvira retired to her chamber at an earlier hour than usual, as her bodily strength had been severely taxed by the adventure which had well nigh cost her her life. But sleep did not visit her eyes immediately; she lay for some time thinking over the day's occurrence. At one time she rehearsed in her mind the lightning speed of her palfrey as it bore her over the perilous road along the river side; then a cold shudder passed through her frame at the vivid recollection of the terrible feeling that had seized upon her as she fell into the water, and her fright and horror while struggling and gasping for breath in the treacherous element which was closing over her sinking form; then again, she bethought herself of the miraculous escape which followed; and, joining her hand in fervent prayer, she poured out her thanksgiving to Him who had kept watch over her. Next to God, her highest tribute of thanks was bestowed upon her generous rescuer. The well-proportioned figure and goodly mien of Vasco Peres stood conspicuously in the foreground of the picture thus exhibited to her mind's eye, and, being represented as a chief actor in that thrilling scene, the low degree of the cooper was often thrown into the shade. While her memory and her imagination were thus at work, Elvira fell asleep.

She had not had time to profit much from her slumber, when she was awoke by a loud knocking at the outer gate. A summons to the gate at that late hour was quite an extraordinary event at the quinta of Alcôa; for its proximity to Alcobaça generally relieved it from all application for hospitality, except on the part of such as were on terms of friendship with the inmates. Somewhat alarmed, Elvira rose from her bed, and hurriedly throwing some clothes over her, she opened a door that led into the adjoining room, which was occupied by Violante.

"Violante, art thou asleep?" asked she.

"What is the matter, my lady; are you indisposed?" cried the young girl, jumping up and running towards the Lady of Runa.

"Dress thyself, my child; we have some visit which I cannot account for at this untimely hour. I am sure I heard the tread of horses. Dress quickly, and come to me."

The windows of Elvira's chamber opened upon the court, and on returning to her room, she heard the sound of voices.

"I charge you in the King's name, open the gates," said one, in a commanding tone, which Elvira thought she recognized.

"And who are you that come in the darkness of night and challenge obedience in the King's name? Have you his warrant?" replied a voice from the court.

"Methinks the presence of Dom Garcia de Cabreira is warrant sufficient. Know your obedience and question no further, or the gates shall be battered in."

"Hold!" cried the other. "Ere you proceed to such violence against the dwelling of a noble lady, who holds herself a faithful vassal of His Highness, first let me make sure it is the noble Dom Garcia who claims admittance, and then give me time to receive the commands of my gracious mistress, for here I obey none but hers."

"It is but meet you apprize her ladyship; besides, our business is with her."

As she listened to this dialogue, a qualm, as it were, came over the fair lady of the mansion; she had reason to fear the Lord of Valverde, especially now that he was invested with the command of a large force, which practically placed him above all law in the then distracted state of the country; whilst she was only attended by a few menials who could give her no adequate protection.

"Violante," said she, in great agitation, to Vasco's sister, who, having hastily put on her clothes, had just entered, "Violante, help to array me. *Virgem Sanctissima!* what will become of us? Here is Dom Garcia demanding admittance in the King's name. If it were any other, I should not be so alarmed; but the coming of this bad man bodes danger."

"Surely you will not suffer the gates to be opened?" said Violante, while performing the functions of bower-woman.

"What can I do else? He would have them forced open. I fear me there is some villainy in this move."

"Sweet lady, order the gates to be kept fast, while we escape by the river-side. We will to Alcobaça that way, and shall be safe at my brother's."

"This were idle, dearest child. If the Lord of Valverde acts by authority of His Highness, I should be no safer there than here. Moreover, if I thought fit to leave the house, there is a surer way for effecting our escape; but afterwards I would be in no less peril. Yet, why should I fear? I have done nought to offend the King—and surely this man will not dare do more than he has warrant for. But I hear footsteps in the corridor; open, Violante, it must be Sancho."

The old porter Sancho, who had served the family from his youth, made his appearance, evincing much anxiety and alarm.

"I have heard all, Sancho; art thou sure it is Dom Garcia de Cabreira?" asked Elvira.

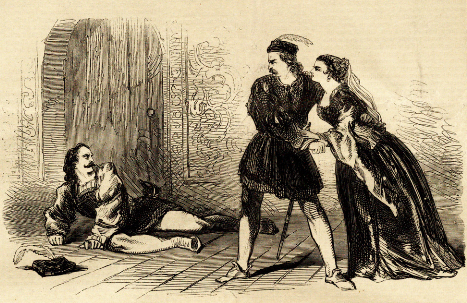
"It is he, my lady; I made sure of this by looking through the opening in the wicket. He has some twelve or fifteen men with him. Ah, Senhora, there are but few of us here; yet, if any harm be meant for you, we need but your license to bar their entry. The gates are as strong as the walls they are hinged on, and I promise that, despite the efforts of these intruders, we can defend them till daylight, at least."

"Nay, good Sancho, I would not suffer my faithful servants to risk themselves in such a useless enterprise. The King's orders must needs be obeyed and his commissioned officer admitted. Go open the gates, Sancho, without further delay," continued she, seeing that the old man still demurred; "and if the Lord of Valverde require my presence, let him await my coming in the great hall."

The ponderous gates were thrown open, and those without passed on into the court-yard. Cabreira and two others were the only persons mounted, all the rest, to the number of a dozen men, were on foot and armed with pikes.

"Take heed, Fernão Rodriques," said Cabreira, in a whisper, to the rider next to him; "should I give the order, use all dispatch in the work, and see to it that not one escape, for it might give us sore trouble."

On dismounting, Cabreira intimated that it was necessary for him to see the lady of the mansion, whereupon old Sancho sent a female servant to deliver the message to her mistress, and then conducted the unwelcome guests into the vestibule, which was spacious and contained three doors leading to different parts of the house, one opposite the entrance, the other two on each side facing each other. Bidding his companions wait in the vestibule, the Lord of Valverde was shown by Sancho into the reception hall, which adjoined the vestibule, and was entered by the door to the left. The servants, both male and female, having been aroused from their slumbers, were also repairing to the hall, some of them with lights, others merely anxious to ascertain the import of this extraordinary, and, to all appearance, ominous visit. A few minutes later, the lady of Runa made her appearance in becoming apparel.



AN UNEXPECTED TURN OF THINGS.

"It were mockery in me, senhor cavalleiro," said she, "to say welcome to you, seeing that you have compelled an unprotected lady to open her door at this time of night; but if your coming is pursuant to the express order of His Highness all due honor shall be paid you, and the royal commands obeyed."

"Credit me, lady," said Cabreira, suiting his looks to his words, "it is with unfeigned reluctance that I disturb you at so unseasonable an hour, and with the deepest regret that I find myself called upon to perform a painful task; my duty and the royal service alone could have moved me to it."

"And pray what can His Highness' service have in common with a lady situated as I am?"

"Noble lady," said Cabreira, with every outward show of respect, "I would fain communicate to you alone what I have to say: treason stalks abroad, and admits of no dalliance. A few moment's conference with you might destroy sundry doubts and strong suspicions, while saving you and your household from much annoyance."

"Treason!" cried Elvira, indignantly; "you jest, sir knight! What can you bring against Elvira Forjaz or any of those under her roof? I would have you speak out before all. There is nought to call for a secret parley between us."

"With your good leave, lady, I must insist. Times are critical, and the safety of the crown takes precedence over every other consideration. If you persist in refusing my request, dictated solely by a sense of deep regard for yourself, I shall be reluctantly compelled, without further loss of time, to adopt some harsh measures."

Elvira hesitated as to what course to pursue. Yet there might be truth in what the Lord of Valverde had said; there might exist some misapprehension which would be dispelled by a few words of explanation, thus saving the threatened scandal. Besides, she thought she would be in no greater jeopardy for passing a few minutes with him, when all her people would be within call, than that in which she was placed already.

"You can retire to the vestibule, all of you," said she, after a moment's hesitation; "but thou shalt stay with me, Violante."

"Craving your pardon, it cannot be; what I have to say is for your ear alone," said Cabreira.

"Fear not, I put great trust in this maiden; your secret will be as safe with her as with myself."

"Lady, it cannot be; you must make the sacrifice of enduring my presence for awhile without witnesses," was the reply of the inexorable Valverde.

Elvira, perceiving that it was useless to contend any longer, allowed Violante to depart with the others.

"Are all the members of your household present, fair lady; if not, I would fain request that you have such as are missing summoned to the vestibule," said Cabreira, advancing to the door and surveying the servants who were assembled there with his own soldiers.

"They are all here, senhor," replied Sancho, ere his mistress had time to answer.

"Lady," said Cabreira, turning to Elvira, after the door was closed, "lady, the words I spoke just now are unfortunately grounded on certain information which has reached me. I grieve to say that there are circumstances which tend to implicate you in a business of the most dangerous kind."

"And pray, would you do me the especial favor of informing me of the charge that is brought against me?" said Elvira, in a quiet, dignified manner.

"I would fain hope, nay, I am willing and anxious to believe, that you are in no way really involved in the matter. But you must fully comprehend that in these desultory and critical times, when the kingdom is invaded by an overwhelming force ready to employ every means, whether fair or foul, in order to bring us under the yoke of the stranger, and seize the crown of João of Avis, the safety of which is identified with our independence, and above all when the craft of secret enemies might blast all our hopes by neutralizing the efforts now being made to ensure success in the impending battle, which is to decide our future destinies; you must comprehend, Senhora Dona Elvira, that at such a moment, neither law nor privileges can be claimed by such as may become subject to the slightest suspicion. Indeed, injustice will often prevail in such cases; but the urgency of the moment pleads in its defence."

"And whither tends this speech, senhor cavalleiro?" asked Elvira, who had scarcely been able to refrain from giving marks of impatience at this harangue.

"To this: that there exists a plot against our lord the king, and that your house harbors conspirators," replied Cabreira.

"This is mockery, sir; an isolated lady and a few servants, most of them old and worn out, turned into conspirators against the king! Will you favor me with the particulars of this most astounding discovery?" said Elvira, ironically.

"Fair lady, to catch the fox alive we must needs for a while play the fox: to thwart the designs of schemers, prudence and secresy are requisite until the danger be past. In this case, the king must be the first advised of that which so closely touches his interets and can alone be dealt with by him. Know, that had I been moved by duty alone, and divulged this business to the king, he had forthwith caused your arrest."

"So you are not deputed by His Highness! You have covered your intrusion under the royal name! O, unheard of audacity!" exclaimed Elvira, with the utmost indignation.

"Hear me, Dona Elvira, before you pass too hasty a judgment upon my proceeding. By whose authority do I command the force in the castle, if not by the king's? Is it not part of my duty to watch and act for the safety of the crown? Could I not, therefore, have put you in durance without awaiting the royal pleasure or giving you my motive? Hear me out, lady," added he, seeing that Elvira was about to interrupt him; "all this I could have done; but it is not my purpose to be harsh; I wish to combine forbearance with duty Hence, in lieu of consulting the king, I come to serve you, to deliver you from danger, while it is yet time."

"I am greatly beholden to you for the good intent, senhor cavalleiro," replied Elvira, sarcastically; "but being in no wise conscious of having erred, I see not in what you can serve me."

"It is known that persons favoring Castile's cause have been in your house, and that your servants, if not yourself, have abetted treason."

"It is a vile calumny: search every corner, and convince yourself."

"This were worse than idle: the proofs I possess are convincing. I believe in your innocence, lady; but if the matter get abroad, it would be beyond my power to avert the consequences. Time presses; the means I have devised for your safety, is that you consent to retire to the convent of Santa Maria de Coz, there to remain until all danger is past. I will conduct you thither with a few trusty men."

"I move not from my home, Sir Knight," said Elvira, in a decided tone.

"Dona Elvira, though you have rejected my love, it burns as strongly as when my hopes were highest; I seek but your own good. The very act of retiring to a convent would prove your innocence, should aught in your disfavor reach the royal ear. Your stay need not be long; things must soon wear a better aspect."

"I repeat, Dom Garcia, I go not. Your eloquence would be ill spent on me. I'll abide the issue."

"Think well on my advice, lady," said Cabreira, in a voice almost stifled by the rage that glowed within him, although, by a supreme effort, he succeeded in repressing all external evidence; "despise not the only channel left open whereby you may ward off the evil that is at hand, ready to test your powers of enduring hardship, at least for a considerable time. Compel me not to throw your servants into a dungeon, place a strict guard over you, and submit the whole case to His Highness."

"Would you then, without just cause, use such violence against an unprotected lady? I have said, search the mansion; or, if you have undoubted proof against any one of my people, produce it, and proceed against the guilty."

"There is no time for dalliance. Dona Elvira, will you or will you not do as I propose?"

"I will not!" replied Elvira, with redoubled firmness.

"Then the evil be on thy own head, rash woman!" cried Cabreira, unable any longer to repress his fury, and advancing towards the door.

"Dom Garcia de Cabreira," exclaimed Elvira, "this is dastardly in you! Truth speaks not in your words; you abuse the trust reposed in you to the injury of a weak woman: this is some infamous plot contrived by you to get me into your power. But beware how you trifle with your present authority: albeit the times are too troubled and too big with perils for the feeble voice of woman, (of no account in the midst of warfare,) to be heard or heeded, yet the soul which lives in João of Avis is too magnanimous to brook such infamy in one that claims to act by his warrant. At your peril, take a single step to my detriment, either in honor or safety, and the king shall know of it despite your precautions. Depart, and leave me and mine in peace."

"You do me wrong, lady; and as I long to undeceive you in your ill-timed suspicions, I shall with all speed command my men to do their duty;" and the foul dissembler again took a step towards the door.

"Dastard! thou art not fit to command brave men. I will denounce thy villainy to thy own soldiers: if there is one spark of manly feeling in their hearts, they will give no heed to thy commands," and so saying, Elvira rushed forward in order to gain the door. But Valverde seized her by the arm, ere she had taken two steps.

"Stand back!" cried he; "your entreaties would be lost on them. Think you I know not my men!"

Then advancing to the door, while Elvira, as if in despair, sunk back into a seat, Cabreira raised the latch, and saying in a loud voice, "Seize them!" instantly closed the door again. The words had no sooner passed his lips, when a tremendous uproar was heard from the vestibule. It was like the shuffling of many feet, the leaping and rushing to and fro of many people, mixed with a din of voices perfectly deafening: there were the gruff tones of the men, accompanied by the piercing screams of the women.

"Help! help!" shrieked Elvira, frantically, as if impelled by instinct; "but why should I call for help? Who is there here to deliver me from the hands of a villain!" and the damsel wrung her hands in despair.

"Nay, recall that word, Elvira; it becomes not thy lips; nor is it suited to one who loves thee with his whole soul—who would gladly spill his last drop for thy sake—who is even now aiming at thy good, and resolved to save thee in thy despite," and the impostor fell upon his knee beside Elvira, of whose hand he attempted to possess himself.

"Keep back, thou demon of hypocrisy! touch me not!" cried the damsel, in the utmost terror. "*You* save me! you, who of all men I have most reason to dread. But no, it cannot be," continued she, suddenly changing her tone for one of supplication; "you must have some generosity; your heart-strings cannot be hard and unyielding like cold iron. Sure, you will not tarnish your fair name by a foul and cowardly act. O! do what you will, but leave me: if you fear my escape, guard the mansion; place a hundred men around; 'tis not a prison I fear, but——"

"Garcia de Cabreira, you would say," added Valverde, perceiving that she checked herself, in order not to provoke him farther; "but you have naught to fear, fair lady; rest assured, you shall finish your broken slumbers with the good nuns of Santa Maria de Coz."

"And am I to travel three leagues with you at this hour of night!" screamed Elvira, in wild terror.

As she spoke, the clamor without suddenly increased in violence, becoming terrific.

"Hark! the uproar is louder and louder," continued Elvira, her face as pale as death. "O, it is dreadful! they will murder my faithful servants. Relent, cruel man; harm not those poor creatures, at least. O! that Vasco Peres were here to save me and mine," added she, seeing that Cabreira would not be moved by prayers. "O! why did he not leave me to perish in the stream."

"That he might free you from the hands of a ruffian," was the response given from the door in a voice of thunder; and Vasco Peres bounded across the hall.

CHAPTER VI.

"There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

By this time the reader will have been able to form some idea of the scheme whereby the lord of Valverde had hoped to effect his villainous purpose of getting Elvira to Coz, a village about three leagues north of Alcobaça, and chiefly noted for its convent of cistercian nuns, founded ninety-five years previously, that is to say, in 1290. By urging the plea of her safety, he had entertained the hope of persuading her to allow herself to be conducted to that community, in which event her household would have been left unmolested; but foreseeing the possibility of resistance on her part, it had been arranged between him and Fernão Rodrigues—an inferior officer who enjoyed his entire confidence, and with whom the reader will hereafter become better acquainted—that, so soon as Cabreira gave the order, Rodrigues and the soldiers should fall upon all the male servants, and then, after binding them hand and foot, confine all the women in some room in the house, from which they could not effect their escape. Then, leaving the foot soldiers as a guard over the place, Cabreira, his confidant, and the other rider would have conveyed Elvira to Coz, where the marriage would have taken place, by force, if Elvira, as was probable, should have persisted in witholding her consent. Thus, ere the news of what had occured at Alcôa could spread, the crowning act of this diabolical plot would have been consummated. It did not escape Cabreira that a discovery of this outrage—and he was aware it could not be concealed for any length of time—might lay him open to condign punishment; but this did not give him much concern, for he relied upon the influence which he enjoyed on account of his acknowledged capacity as a commander, knowing full well that his services could not be dispensed with in the then condition of affairs; and in the midst of the general commotion, the wrongs of a helpless lady would soon be forgotten. As to Elvira, he felt assured, that, even while abhorring him, she would soon find it necessary, for the sake of her own honor and peace of mind, to become reconciled to a fate for which there could be no human remedy.

When Elvira ordered her people to retire into the vestibule, there were present some eight or nine men attached to various departments of the lady's service, besides about half a dozen women, including Violante. The duties of the greater part of these men were connected with the supervision of the farm and the care of the stables. None of the laborers were there; for, according to the custom of the country, the farming was carried on by out-door hands, who worked by the day. So soon as Cabreira gave the order, as mentioned in the last chapter, a soldier stationed himself at each of the three doors with his pike in rest, in order to guard against the escape of any one, while the others, drawing forth cords with which they came provided, proceeded to seize the men for the purpose of binding them fast. At first the latter made a fierce resistance, which caused the uproar already referred to; but, being unarmed, they were compelled to cease all further opposition, when the soldiers threatened them with their weapons. The work of handcuffing and leg-tying was proceeding, in the midst of the vociferation and curses of the men and the screams of the terrified women, who were huddled together in a corner like a flock of sheep, when the door opposite the entrance was suddenly forced open, and Vasco and his twenty coopers poured into the vestibule with drawn swords, falling upon the astonished and bewildered soldiers, whom they soon overpowered, some of the coopers keeping them pinned down by main force, while others hastened to loosen the cords which secured the servants. But the coopers were not alone: a monk followed close behind them. Over the white frock of St. Bernard he wore a cloak of a different shape from that used by the order, inasmuch as a cowl was attached to it, which the monk had drawn over his head and face, keeping it fast with his hand in such a way as to conceal his features.

"Now, my lads, bind every one of these wretches hand and foot," cried Vasco; then, seeing his sister who had sprung to his arms, he embraced her, and said:

"Where shall I find the Senhora?"

"There," answered she and the other women, pointing to the door.

Leaving to his men and the liberated servants the care of tying the soldiers with the very bonds they themselves had brought, little anticipating the use they would at last be put to, Vasco raised the latch and entered the great hall in the manner already described.

"Vasco! my rescuer," exclaimed Elvira as she sprang towards him.

Cabreira, who, with his back turned on the door, was in the act of approaching the lady of Runa for the purpose of trying to pacify her, had scarcely time to look round, as the stentorian voice of our hero fell upon his ear, ere he felt himself seized by the back of the collar in an iron gripe and hurled to the floor.

"Banish all fears, lady; you are safe now," said Vasco, supporting the tottering frame of Elvira, until his sister came up to replace him. Then, turning to Cabreira—who was hastily regaining his legs, the scowl of rage upon his brow and the blush of shame upon his cheek—he continued: "Cowardly man! who, like the skulking burglar, hast availed thee of the dead of night to break into the abode of an unprotected lady, thy dastardly conduct shall not go unpunished."

"Guard thyself, vile knave!" cried Cabreira, drawing his weapon and making a pass at Vasco, who crossed swords with him.

"Here! two or three of you, lay hold of Dom Garcia," cried the monk from the door, addressing himself to the coopers: "be quick about it, this combat must not proceed."

The two combatants had exchanged only a few passes, when three or four men, prompt in obeying the monk's command, seized Cabreira, who in vain struggled to free himself from their grasp.

"Why this interference, father?" said Vasco hastily, but instantly lowering the point of his sword; "I would fain have chastised this false knight."

"Base churls!" cried Cabriera, "dare you lay hands on the King's lieutenant? Your heads shall pay the forfeit; or rather you shall swing for this; and the neck of yon insolent caitiff shall be the first to feel the twitch of the halter."

"These wild threats will in naught avail you: this is not the land for lopping heads or hanging people at the mere beck and nod of such as you; and as for tyrants, we have as yet been free from them, and mean to continue so. This is why, one and all, we are ready to shed our last drop for Dom João of Avis," said Vasco.

"The mask thou assumest is too much worn, and too flimsy in its texture, to deceive any but fools," said Cabreira with assurance, regaining all his wonted self-possession. "I see I was not mistaken in suspecting that this was a den of conspirators; your presence with this gang bespeaks it. You have made bold to interfere, and hinder me in the performance of my duty; but ere long you will writhe for such unheard of temerity. Meanwhile your best course would be to unhand me and my men, whom I perceive you have overcome by a cowardly and unexpected assault."

"I despise your base insinuations," replied Vasco with contempt, "and will only add that when those who wear the spurs forswear their knightly duty, and so far forget that courtesy and protection due the fair sex, from them more than any others, as to fill the part of the worst ruffian, they lose all claim to consideration from those below them; and even such as can show a royal warrant."

Vasco's speech was here cut short by the monk, who, taking him by the arm, drew him away to the embrasure of a window, and spoke to him in a low tone so as not to be overheard.

"Beware, Vasco; these are no times for trifling. Dom Garcia commands a large force which will be ordered off in a day or two. It were high treason to retain him, granting this were possible; and folly, when we consider that by morning his men-at-arms would come to his rescue."

"This I know full well, frei Lopo; and we must needs let them go their way. But see you not that they might return again in greater numbers, alleging the same pretext of conspiracy. In order to prevent this, if possible, I was about to exact an oath from Dom Garcia ere liberating him."

"Thou hast nought to fear on this score;

leave this to me. Yet, there is no harm in requiring that he give us such an assurance."

"It seems to me, father, you rely much upon your power. Have you, then, any influence with this wicked man?" asked Vasco, in a tone of great surprise.

"You shall see, my son; but let me again remind thee of what I have already warned thee; should he ask my name, tell it not—harm might follow," said frei Lopo, as they left the window.

The monk went up to Cabreira and whispered a few words in his ear. The effect was magical; starting back as if he had trod on a serpent, with cheeks as pale as death, he looked round to see who had spoken those words, which must have had some sinister import to have been able to produce such a change in his expression; but all he saw was the retreating figure of the monk, as it passed through the door which led into the vestibule.

"Who is that monk?" asked he, with a faltering voice.

"That is more than I can tell," replied Vasco; "what I do know is, that he belongs to the monastery, as you must have seen by his habit."

"But how is it he came with you? You must know something of him, at least enough to hold secret converse with him, as you did just now at yonder casement," said Cabreira, now quite recovered from his momentary perturbation.

"I can tell you no more than I know, Dom Garcia. But I marvel at this sudden fit of curiosity; what matters it to you who he is?" replied Vasco.

"In truth, I care not much to know," said Cabreira, with assumed indifference; "yet, seeing the care he took to keep his face from view, it is an allowable curiosity; besides, he must have some evil purpose in acting thus. But tell me, do you propose consulting your own good by ordering these fellows to relax their brutal hold."

"Senhor Dom Garcia," said Vasco, breaking in upon his speech, "if you will promise to leave the quinta quietly, and to refrain from molesting this noble lady for the future, you are at liberty to go your way, and I will command your men to be released."

"It ill speeds one of thy condition to presume to instruct me regarding my future course," replied the Lord of Valverde, striving to suppress the irritation that was fermenting within; "but let this pass for the present; thou hast enough to account for as it is. To thee I have naught to say in this matter; but, lady," continued he, addressing himself to Elvira, "I am willing to promise *you* that, unless compelled by the express command of His Highness, you shall not again be troubled by me or any of those under my direction. And I——"

"This will suffice, Senhor," said Vasco, interrupting him; "unhand him, my lads. Hola! there, unbind the men," added he, advancing to the door.

What with the unexpected overthrow of his plans, the mysterious words of the monk, and the fear lest Vasco suspected his real purpose in coming to Alcôa, Cabreira was quite crest-fallen, and ere retiring he spoke a few words of excuse to Elvira in a faltering voice.

"I fain would hope, fair lady, that you may view this proceeding of mine in no other light than as having been urged to it by necessity, and in no manner tending to your injury."

"Enough, senhor," replied Elvira, with indignation at such bare-faced hypocrisy: "though but a weak woman, I am not so easily imposed upon as you would seem to think. You," added she, with dignity, as if spurning to give vent to the feelings which the attempted outrage had naturally roused in her bosom, "you alone know, perhaps, the full extent of your iniquitous intentions; may your future conduct be such as to remove all ground for the suspicions which now, with good reason, exist in my mind."

"Time will show how much you wrong me, lady." Then, as he passed by Vasco, he muttered, between his teeth, so as to be heard by him: "Thou shalt yet have reason to rue thy temerity, Vasco Peres."

"I know full well the enemy I shall have to cope with in future," replied the cooper, with perfect calmness in his voice.

A few minutes later, the Lord of Valverde and his soldiers were on their return to Alcobaça.

It were needless to expatiate upon the gratitude shown by Elvira for this timely interference of Vasco and his men. She expressed her thanks in the warmest terms, adding that henceforth she looked upon it as a duty to do all in her power that might contribute to his own and his sister's happiness."

"You are too prompt in giving me all the credit of this service, senhora," said Vasco, after the room had been cleared of all except Elvira, Violante and himself; "there is one who has a better right to your gratitude than myself."

"Who, then?" asked Elvira, with surprise.

"Frei Lopo, the monk of whom I spoke to you this afternoon. I have just requested Sancho to see if he can be found anywhere."

"Was that Frei Lopo who was here just now? What could induce him to hide his face so carefully?"

"All I know is that he wished to conceal his features from Dom Garcia. Though not informed of his motive, I conceive it to be a pressing one; and he particularly recommended me and my men not to give his name, should Dom Garcia make any inquiry about him," replied Vasco.

"It would seem that he knew Dom Garcia, and was unwilling to be recognized. Did you not observe how pale the Lord of Valverde turned when the monk whispered to him?" observed Elvira.

"Methinks it were just such a look as he wore, that might sit upon the face of a criminal to whom the death-doom had been unexpectedly announced," added Violante.

"The effect was wonderful; nor can I hazard the least conjecture as to the purport of those mysterious words. In truth, the monk is a riddle in himself: know you, lady, how we got into the mansion?"

"By the gates, I presume," answered Elvira, astonished at such a question.

"Nay, by a secret passage."

"What, by the underground passage!" cried Elvira, in amazement.

"Even so," replied Vasco.

"And how did you make that discovery?"

"Frei Lopo served as guide; and we were in the house before Dom Garcia and his soldiers arrived."

"How *could* the monk know of that passage?" said Elvira, as if communing with herself; "methought none but old Sancho and myself were in the secret, now that my poor uncle is no more. It is inconceivable——"

She was interrupted by the entrance of Sancho himself, who came to say that the monk had been searched for, but was no where to be found.

"Sancho, hast thou ever seen that monk before to-day?" asked Elvira.

"Indeed, I cannot say, my lady, for I did not see his face," replied Sancho.

"True, I forgot; but tell me, hast thou ever revealed to any one the existence of the subterranean passage?"

"Never; not to a living soul," replied Sancho, emphatically, not a little astonished at the inquiry.

"Leave us, Sancho. This is an impenetrable mystery," continued Elvira, becoming more and more perplexed. "Who can this frei Lopo be?"

"We must needs believe that he is what his habit bespeaks him—a monk of Alcobaça; for the brother who came from the monastry to attend upon you this morning, seemed to be well acquainted with him, and they both went away together. Howsoever this may be, it is none the less true that you owe your present safety to this strange, but good and pious monk. He it was who advised me of your peril."

"And how did he gain a knowledge of it?" asked Elvira.

"He did not inform me. Here is, in a few words, what led to my coming to your rescue a second time to-day: This evening frei Lopo came to my house, and, by the extreme anxiety of his looks I immediately suspected something was wrong. He fully expected to have found you there, lady, as I had told him this morning that you would probably not return to the quinta till next day. But when he learnt that you were here, his alarm increased. He told me that an attempt was to be made by Dom Garcia to carry you off to-night, and wanted to know if I thought my men would be willing to undertake a rescue, and whether they were people to be depended upon; for, this being the case, he could place us in such a position as to enable us to thwart the design of Dom Garcia without much danger to ourselves, even against large odds. I not only assured him of the full confidence I reposed in my workmen, and their readiness to do as I might direct; but proposed coming at once to keep guard over the gates of the mansion. Frei Lopo objected to this, saying that his plan was certain of being attended with success, if I would consent to leave the management to him. After a few explanations, I readily agreed to this, and, in accordance with his instructions, went in quest of my men. Finding them all willing to act as I desired, I told them to come hither well armed, but singly, and to meet me under the wall near the river. Then, returning home, where the monk was waiting for me, I armed myself, and we repaired together to the appointed rendezvous. When we were all assembled down yonder by the river, frei Lopo made us give a solemn promise never, without his previous sanction, to inform any one, except yourself, of the way by which he proposed to introduce us into the mansion. It was there also that he recommended secresy regarding his name. He then led us to the entrance of the underground passage, with which he appeared to be perfectly acquainted, giving no signs of doubt or hesitation as to whether he was guiding us right. We entered the passage, and after feeling our way for some time, arrived at a door, where we were directed to remain quiet. We had been there about half an hour, beginning to feel somewhat oppressed by the foulness of the air and chilled by the dampness of the place, when a general bustle and much running to and fro in the corridor told us that the moment of action was at hand. I wished the monk to open the door at once, and let us in; but this he would not do, saying that he must first ascertain how things were, in order to choose the most favorable moment for a surprise, as there was no telling how many soldiers Dom Garcia had brought with him. As we were only separated by a door from the corridor which leads to the vestibule, the sound of voices and footsteps was perfectly audible, though no words could be distinguished. When all became quiet outside, frei Lopo touched a spring and the door flew open. Bidding us remain where we were, he disappeared for a few minutes, but soon returned, telling us that there were a dozen soldiers in the vestibule, quietly conversing with the servants, and that we must wait to see what turn matters took, abiding the first signal of distress. A little later, we were startled by outcries proceeding from the interior of the house; then, emerging from the tunnel, and forming into a body, while the monk remained behind to close the door, we rushed into the vestibule. The rest is known to you, gracious lady."

"There is something in all this that passes my skill," observed Elvira, thoughtfully, when Vasco had brought his narrative to a close; "his being no stranger to the passage; yet this he might have discovered by accident during his rambles. But his knowledge of that villain's purpose, the effect of those mysterious words, and his anxiety to keep his name from Dom Garcia, seem to argue that the two are not unknown to each other. And why should he have taken himself off so soon?"

"It may well be that he thought his absence from the convent, at so late an hour, might be noticed there; which would make him desire to get back as soon as possible," suggested Vasco.

"Well, I must confess that my curiosity is amazingly excited," observed Elvira; then, with a kind smile, she added: "But it is only right you and your brave companions take some refreshment after undergoing so much toil and discomfort on my account. Go, dearest Violante, and order supper to be prepared immediately."

"Lady," said Vasco, "you had better retire to your repose again; you must be in sore need of rest after all the hardships you have endured this day; a frame so delicately nurtured was but ill prepared to be put to such rude assaults."

"Nay, my good friend, I must first tell you of the scene that occurred between me and the bad man from whom you have just saved me," and Elvira proceeded to relate from point to point that with which the reader is already acquainted.

"And now," continued she, "what think you of our purpose of going to Runa? Would it be prudent in the face of this daring attempt of Dom Garcia? Might he not lay in wait for us?"

"Go, senhora, by all means," replied Vasco; "he would not dare move far from Alcobaça at a moment like this, or detach any considerable body of troops, when orders for his advance are hourly expected. Besides, Frei Lopo assured me there was no fear of Dom Garcia molesting you again. And, however strange the monk be in his movements, one thing is certain, he has shown a friendly interest in your concerns. Moreover, if it be your good pleasure, I and my comrades will attend you as far as Obidos; beyond that point you would have nought to fear, and your servants would prove a sufficient guard."

"Then, be it so," said Elvira; "we set out to-morrow, three hours after noon, and I willingly commit the protection of my person to the custody of one whose worth has already twice proved so invaluable to me."

Elvira retired to her chamber, whilst Vasco and the coopers proceeded to do justice to the hospitality of the fair lady of Runa. The hours of night were nearly spent ere they returned to their homes; and, before separating, Vasco told his men that there would be no work at the shop that day, but that he expected them there about noon, whence they would all return to Alcôa for the purpose of escorting Elvira.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

WHO does not know many instances of the most heroic devotedness on the part of the sex? A woman spares no effort to serve her friend. When it is a question of saving her husband, her brother, her father, she penetrates into prisons—she throws herself at he feet of her sovereign. Such are the women of our day, and such has history represented those of antiquity.

THE ORIGINAL ROBINSON CRUSO.

This inimitable story, which has been rendered into every civilized tongue, and read by millions, will still continue to give delight to generations yet unborn, and the name of Defoe will endure, with blessings, when those of mighty emperors and conquerors shall have been long forgotten.

In a rare old Spanish work which I obtained in Mexico, entitled, "*Cuenta Verdadera de las Filibusteres*," (a True Account of the Pirates,) written by one *Francisco Alderete*, and bearing the date of 1694, I find the following narrative, which there is no doubt gave the author of Robinson Cruso the foundation for his enchanting and instructive story.

After giving a detailed and somewhat exaggerated account of the notorious Morgan, and his audacious attack upon Panama, and the other Spanish settlements of the isthmus, the writer gives the history of the succeeding buccaneers, till he comes to the year 1680, when "an Englishman named Barty, or Bartolomo Sharp," following the example of the Welsh knight, attempted the plunder of Panama and Darien.

"This man," says the Spanish narrative, "consorting with him a large number of the reckless and wicked spirits to be found floating about the islands and along the American shores, pretended to enter into an alliance with a tribe of Indians called Mosquitos, and receiving several of these barbarians into his service, started on a marauding expedition across the isthmus.

"Sharp left seven ships riding at anchor in the bay where he had his first interview with the Indians, and selecting three or four hundred of his desperadoes, made his first attempt against the town of Santa Maria, on the South Sea side of the isthmus. After nine days' travel by land and water, during which time more than two hundred Indians joined them, the pirates reached the town, which they plundered, and put a great number of the inhabitants to death. This latter, however, was the work of the savages, who had always shown a great hatred of the Christian Spaniards. They would not have left a soul at the mission, had it not been for the leader of the filibusteros.

"Our people had been warned by a friendly native of the approach of the English freebooters, and had taken the precaution to secrete a portion of their effects. The disappointment of not obtaining more booty discouraged a large number of the desperadoes, who, wearied with a long and painful journey, that yielded so small a reward, returned to their ships. The rest, however, at the head of whom remained their captain, Sharp, pushed on to the assault of Panama. But the garrison of this place, having learned caution and vigilance from former costly experience, were prepared for them.

"Finding the city too strongly defended to risk an attack, the pirates contented themselves with taking possession of several ships in the harbor. One of these was a large bark, capable of carrying a crew of two hundred men. She was richly freighted with a cargo of wine, sugar and sweetmeats, and a large sum of money. The other vessels contained valuable loadings of provisions and ammunition. They had just arrived from Spain, and in three days more would have safely landed their cargoes into the town.

"Being now in possession of these noble vessels, the buccaneers determined upon launching their fortunes upon the great South Seas, and this is the first piratical expedition ever known to have entered upon those waters.

"This was in the month of June, 1680, and so rejoiced were the Spaniards of Panama at their fortunate escape, that as the English sailed out of the bay the bells of the churches were made to send forth exultant peals, and *Te Deums* were chanted for three days. The loss of the newly arrived vessels, with their cargoes, though a grievous misfortune to their owners, was but a trifle compared with the evils that would have followed the falling of the town into the hands of those vile pirates."

After narrating the adventures of the buccaneers along the Peruvian coasts, and deprecating their atrocious robberies and murders, as they proceeded southward, the author continues:—

"On the 9th of January, 1681, the piratical fleet made the uninhabited island of *Mas-a-Terriæ* (Juan Fernandez), and steering for the roadstead on the northern side, dropped anchors and landed upon the shore, determined, as was their custom, to indulge in a general debauch for several days, and to make division of their plunder, obtained at the town of La Serena.

"Here they landed tents and brandy, and for a few days a scene of gambling and riot was kept up, which ended in a general quarrel as to the future destination of their voyage.

"Some were for returning northward to the isthmus, and once more making a descent upon Panama, while others, headed by Captain Sharp, were for doubling the continent into the other ocean. The isthmus party, as they styled themselves, being the most numerous, deposed their old leader, and selected an old buccaneer named Guatlin as their commander.

"Sharp being obliged to submit to this arrangement, was made to fill an inferior grade among the crew. Scarcely had this change taken place, than a party of hunters among the hills espied a fleet of Spanish vessels making toward the island. Hastening to the shore, they gave the alarm to their companions, and the order was immediately given to return on board the vessels, and make all haste to escape. They had no doubt the strange sails were armed frigates sent out in search of them. Such was the fact. The Spanish vessels were from the port of Callao, and had been cruising for the pirates for several months. They had traced them to La Serena, from which port it had leaked out that they would steer for Mas-a-Tierriæ.

"Signals guns were fired to recall the stragglers. But when the crews returned to their ships, it was found that a Mosquito Indian, named Guilliamo, had been left behind. He was absent with his musket in search of goats, which abound among the mountains of the island. His comrades, among whom the Indian was a favorite, begged to be permitted to return for him, but the appearance of the Spaniards rounding the point, warned the pirates to make all sail with the greatest dispatch."

The writer, after narrating at length the returning voyage of the buccaneers, their sacking and destroying of the coast towns to the south of Callao, continues:—

"They now sailed northward to the Gulf of Nicoya. But meeting with no prizes there, they returned to the island of Plala, picking up three ships on their way. The first was the San Pedro, with a cargo of cocoanuts, and 40,000 pieces of eight in chests, and 20,000 in bags, besides a large amount of plate. The money in bags, together with all the loose plunder, was divided on the spot, giving each man over three hundred pieces of eight. The money in chests was reserved for future division.

"Their second prize was a ship from Panama, bound to Callao. The third was the San Rosario, which, being armed, made a bold resistance, and submitted only after the captain and most of the crew were killed. She came from Callao with a cargo of wine, brandy, and fruit, and had in her as much money as yielded a hundred pieces of eight to every buccaneer. But on account of their great ignorance of the precious metal, they missed a much richer prize. There were nearly a thousand large bars of plate, stowed away in the hold, which the pirates mistook for tin, on account of its not being refined and fitted for coining. They only took a part of one of these bars, which they melted up into musket balls; the rest they threw into the sea to lighten the vessel, which they exchanged for one of their own, the San Rosario being a good sailer."

Soon after this the buccaneers reached the isthmus, and with the assistance of the friendly Indians, they crossed over to the other sea, and found their way to their old rendezvous among the West Indies.

Two or three years after the voyage above described, another expedition was fitted out from Jamaica for the South Seas, in which embarked the same Guatlin, with a number of his former companions, and some of the Mosquito Indians, who seem to have united their fortunes with the buccaneers. This time they reached the Pacific by way of the Stormy Cape, and steered directly for the Island of Juan Fernandez. And here I will let the Spanish historian of the buccaneers resume the narrative:

"When this second expedition came within sight of the rocky hills of Mas-a-Tierriæ, Guatlin and the Indians were reminded of the poor fellow, their comrade, whom they had abandoned there in their haste to escape the Spanish ships. This was in the month of May, 1684. These men were still attached to the abandoned Indian, and begged permission to land upon the island and search for him. This was granted; and an English sailor, named Dampier, who, though marauder and robber as he was, has described the scene which took place on their arriving at the shore, with exquisite simplicity and feeling, accompanied them.

"Dampier was accompanied in the boat by Robin, a Mosquito Indian and relation of Guilliamo, who, espying their approach from a distance, and recognizing his old shipmates, was awaiting their arrival with expressions of astonishment and delight.

"'Robin, his countryman,' says Dampier, 'was the first who leaped ashore from the boat, and running to his brother Mosquito man, threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who, helping him up and embracing him, fell flat with his face on the ground at Robin's feet, and was by him taken up also. We stood with pleasure to behold the surprise, tenderness and solemnity of this interview, which was exceedingly affectionate on both sides; and when their ceremonies were over, we, also, that stood gazing at them, drew near, each of us embracing him we had found here, who was overjoyed to see so many of his old friends come hither, as he thought, purposely to fetch him.'

"Guilliamo had by this time, lived in utter solitude for more than three years. The Spaniards knew that he had been left behind by the buccaneers, and several ships of our nation had stopped there, and sent people in pursuit of him, but he, dreading that they would put him to death, as an ally of the pirates, had each time fled and hid himself among the rocks of the hills.

"When his friends first sailed away and left him at Mas-a-Terriæ, the Indian had with him a musket, a small horn of powder, and a knife. When his ammunition was expended, he contrived, by notching his knife, to saw the barrel of his gun into small pieces, with which he fashioned harpoons, lances, hooks, and a long knife, first heating the bits of iron in a fire and hammering them out into the desired shape with stones.

"This may seem strange to those not acquainted with the sagacity of the Indians. But it is no more than the Mosquito men are accustomed to in their own country.

"He had worn out the English clothes with which he had landed, and now had no covering save a goatskin round his waist. For fishing, he made lines from seal skins cut into thongs. He had built himself a hut half a league from the shore, which he lined with goat skins, and slept on a couch, or *barbecu* of sticks raised about two feet from the ground, and spread with goatskins.

"He saw the buccaneer ships the day before they arrived, and with his quick sight, perceived at a great distance, that from their rigging and manner of manœuvering they were English. He therefore killed three goats, which he dressed with vegetables, and when his friends and liberators landed, he had a feast ready prepared for them."

* * *

SOWING AND REAPING.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE STEPMOTHER," "MINNIGREY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

When law can do no right,
Let it be lawful that law can do no wrong.
SHAKSPEARE.

Captain Riddle possessed one quality which counts for much in forming either a good or evil man—great coolness in the moment of danger, and equal aptitude for turning every circumstance to advantage. He had not been many hours in prison before he saw, or fancied he saw, the means of extricating himself from his dilemma. He was accredited from one of the wealthiest firms in London to a house of equal standing—Grant and Company—in Leghorn, who would be certain to bring their interest to bear in his favor, could he only persuade them of his innocence. Funds were not wanting to carry out his designs. As captain of the Amazon, he had full power to draw from the consignees on account of cargo.

His first act was to write a cautiously worded letter to Sir Jasper Mansell.

The second, to solicit a visit from the senior partner of the house of Grant and Co.

On the morning after the release of the prisoners from the Casa Nero, the gentleman arrived at the prison. He was a thorough Englishman—English in his mode of transacting business, habits, and way of thinking; English also in his prejudices and weaknesses. Like most of his countrymen who have resided any length of time upon the Continent, Mr. Grant entertained a profound contempt for the character of its inhabitants. Signor Benetti was, perhaps, the only exception to the rule, and even him he disliked as a successful rival in trade. Not that he would have acknowledged such a feeling, or suspected its existence. It was one of those under-currents tinging our actions without our being aware that the springs which feed it lie buried in the recesses of our own weak hearts.

In person he was a stout, middle-aged man of most respectable appearance, with a bald, shining forehead, and a keen, gray eye that occasionally expressed his thoughts more eloquently than his lips.

"This is an ugly affair, Captain," was the first salutation on entering the cell. "Bless me, how stifling the air is here. What a place to confine an Englishman in!"

"I don't mind the air, sir, so much as the disgrace," replied Riddle, in a tone of wounded feeling.

"Well no, I suppose—I hope not," ejaculated his visitor; "but the charge is a most serious one. Italy has been deluged with forged notes upon the Bank of Lombardy; my own firm has suffered."

"Has it?" exclaimed the prisoner, eagerly.

"More than once."

"And you have never been suspected of a guilty knowledge of them?"

"Suspected!" repeated the merchant; "suspect the house of Grant and Company! I should like to catch them at it. No, bad as they are, they never pushed their impudence to that extent."

"Why, then, should they suspect me?"

"We have always been able to prove from whom we received them," observed the gentleman.

"And so am I," said the captain; "Sir Jasper Mansell gave them to me. I requested an advance before sailing. The letter of recommendation I brought must have convinced you, sir, of my respectability."

"It has given me a favorable opinion of you," was the cautious reply; "and, but for one circumstance, would have convinced me. Signor Malvolio, the chief of the police, whom I have seen, informs me that there is a person actually in Leghorn who saw you receive the notes from the man who forged them—heard you bargain for them in London."

"It must be that red-haired girl," thought Riddle.

"If her assertion is true——"

"It is false, sir," interrupted the prisoner; "a wicked lie—concocted out of revenge for preventing the girl who accompanied her disgracing the family of Sir Jasper by marrying his son. I was wrong, perhaps, in bringing them away," he added; "but I did it for the best. The voyage would have done them no harm."

Mr. Grant was the father of a family—had sons of his own; and if he did not altogether approve of such an aristocratic mode of proceeding, he understood it.

"Besides," added the speaker, "they have no right to give me up to the Austrians."

"That is your only chance," replied the visitor. "The English consul has already protested against it; our minister to the court of Tuscany is daily expected; when he arrives, I will see what can be done."

"In the meantime I must remain in this infernal dog-hole."

The merchant confessed that he saw no other resource for him.

"Perhaps, sir," added the captain, in a tone of resignation, "you will undertake to forward a letter for me to Sir Jasper; I am afraid to trust it to the prison authorities—they might open, or suppress it altogether."

"Not unlikely," said the gentleman.

Mr. Grant willingly undertook the charge of it, and Riddle, drawing the letter from his pocket, placed it unsealed in his hands.

"Am I to read it?"

"If you like," repeated the hypocritical ruffian, with affected bluntness; "there are no secrets between Sir Jasper and myself. All fair and above board."

The letter ran thus:

"HONORED SIR,—I have got into a precious scrape about those Italian notes you gave me. Your nephew, who is here, says they are forgeries; the bank says they are forgeries, and the police have clapped me in limbo. Of course it is all a lie, but they won't believe me. Please write at once and get me out of this by explaining from whom you received them; there can be no difficulty in making it all right. *After my long and faithful services*, you will never leave me to rot in a filthy prison.

"N. B.—They talk of giving me up to the Austrians. The ship and cargo are all safe.—Signed CAPTAIN RIDDLE."

"I will not only forward it," said the merchant, after perusing it, "but use my influence with the consul to demand your release on bail. At present, I fear, he is somewhat prejudiced against you."

The eyes of the prisoner sparkled with joy; once at liberty he mentally resolved on the kind of bail he would give them.

"Can I do anything further for you?"

The captain hinted something about cash.

"Draw on account of freight for what you require," replied Mr. Grant, who preferred doing everything in a business-like manner; "it shall be honored."

A few hours afterwards Riddle was in possession of ample funds to carry out the design he had conceived, which was nothing less than the assassination of the maid-of-all-work, the only real witness against him. The girl out of the way, the ruffian believed that he could struggle successfully against the unsupported accusation of Harold. To be sure, the finding of the notes upon him had an ugly appearance, but with the connivance of Sir Jasper Mansell, even that might be got over.

Under the old *régime* there were few indulgences short of liberty that could not be procured in an Italian prison by those who had money. The salaries of the officials were merely nominal, and often irregularly paid. It was an understood thing that the prisoners were delivered into their hands to torment, fleece, indulge, and make the most of according to their means. The captain, therefore, found no difficulty in obtaining an interview with Paulo, from whom he learnt for the first time of the release of Clara, Hannah, and Harry from the Casa Nero. The difficulty, as a matter of course, doubled his price, and our readers can understand where he obtained the bag of dollars offered to the chief of the police, and what the ruffian meant when he hinted to his brothers that the commission intrusted to him by that dreadful functionary was not the only one he had to regulate in the house of Signor Benetti.

Having, as he trusted, cleverly arranged his affairs, and guarded against the most pressing danger, the prisoner waited patiently for the arrival of our hero—to whom he had written a most abject letter, entreating to see him alone, if only for a few minutes.

But for one passage in it he undoubtedly would have declined complying with his request.

"The honor of the name you bear, and the life of a near relative, depend upon my seeing you."

The suspicion that the menace had some allusion to his cousin Harry decided him to conquer the repugnance he naturally felt at holding intercourse with such a wretch; and Harold reluctantly consented to the meeting.

"Well, youngster," said the ruffian, trying to assume an independent, fearless manner, "how do we meet—as friends or enemies?"

"As enemies!" was the calm, yet decided response.

"Frank, at any rate!—but you can insult me safely now!"

"I must always be the enemy of the heartless and depraved," continued his visitor. "There is a principle in me that abhors deceit. You put the question to me plainly, and I answered it as plainly, but without the least wish to insult you. I scorn to triumph over the fallen!"

"Are you quite sure that I am fallen?" demanded Riddle.

Harold glanced round the gloomy cell.

"Ah! the walls are strong enough," continued the speaker, "to satisfy even your hatred of me—but stronger have been broken through."

"True."

"And may be again."

"Possibly."

"I'm not quite beaten yet."

"Was it to impart your hopes and expectations of evading justice that you sent for me?" demanded our hero, in the same unmoved tone.

"I warn you that you have chosen your confidant unwisely."

"No," replied Riddle, more subdued.

"To appeal to my pity, then? Remember that you have never shown any."

"Pity be hanged!" exclaimed the captain.

"I am not one of the snivelling sort. Pity! pooh—I know exactly how much that is worth! I wouldn't give a piece of rotten junk for all the pity in Leghorn. No, it's your interests I meant to appeal to."

"Speak, I am ready to hear you."

"Most men are," observed the prisoner, with renewed confidence, "when they are in question. Have you reflected, young gentleman, on the position in which your hostility to me may place your uncle?"

"You do not mean to infer that Sir Jasper Mansell is in any way connected with your forgeries! The accusation is too ridiculous. His known wealth——"

"Wealth!" repeated Riddle, with a loud laugh; "how did he become so?"

Our hero made no reply.

"I can tell you," continued the speaker, lowering his voice; "by a double crime, which I can prove. You are not fool enough to imagine that the apprenticing of your cousin, or intrusting me with the girl, were the first or only affairs we have been mutually concerned in?"

"I have never asked myself the question," observed Harold, calmly.

"Ask it now, then, and I will answer it. Thirty years have passed since we first transacted business together. You have got me into this precious scrape, and must get me out of it, or I will blow the gaff—split—tell all I know."

"As far as I am concerned you are welcome to tell it. It cannot affect me."

"Can't it?" said the ruffian; "can't it affect you to bear the name of a man inscribed in the Newgate Calendar, that mothers will frighten their crying children with?—to meet the cold looks of those who once grasped your hand in friendship—hear the half-suppressed whisper—witness the smile of scorn, the look of surprise at your presumption when you enter a room, the sneer of contempt when you quit it—feel the brand of Cain upon you—know that wherever you present yourself men point the finger at you as the nephew of a robber?"

Our hero started.

"Of a murderer?" added the ruffian, in a whisper.

The countenance of Harold became fearfully pale.

"I can prove him both!"

"I do not believe it!" exclaimed our hero, passionately. "I will not believe it! My uncle, I well know, is a greedy, grasping, avaricious man—ostentatious, fond of wealth, but little scrupulous, perhaps, as to the means of gaining it; but that he should ever have stained his hands in blood—no, no—impossible!"

"Did you ever hear of Clement Chambers?"

At the name of the murdered clerk his visitor sank upon the only seat in the cell, overcome with horror. It was the only one that could have shaken him.

"Ah!" exclaimed Riddle, triumphantly, "you have heard of it! Hang me if I suspected it! With your fine words and preaching about honor and such humbug, you deceived even me. Well, Mr. Mansell, are we to come to an understanding—eh, eh?"

"No," answered the young man, very faintly; "if my wretched uncle has sinned, he must bear the penalty of his crime."

"And you the disgrace," replied the prisoner, savagely, "in common with all who bear the name of Mansell. It is written," he added, with a sneer, "on the gravestone of your father in Lowelstree churchyard. What a pity you were in such a hurry to erect one!"

"Wretch!" exclaimed the young man, greatly agitated, "dare not to pollute the name of my dear father with your accursed breath!"

"Not I," said the captain. "I was only about to suggest an additional line to be engraved upon the stone: 'Thirty years curate of Lowelstree, and brother to Sir Jasper Mansell, who was hanged for murder.'"

Independent of his own horror of such a disgrace, the memory of his father was something sacred to Harold—a thing regarded with veneration and love—an inheritance he felt proud of. No wonder that the prospect of seeing it branded with infamy—for the world is rarely just in its distinctions—shook him terribly. At one moment he was ready to concede all the ruffian could ask, join him in any means to baffle the ends of justice, as the price of his silence. Fortunately, the recollection of the lessons his parent had instilled into his youthful mind came to his aid, and preserved him from so fatal an error.

"*As my uncle has sown, so must he reap!*" he said. "I must bear my own part in his dishonor as best I may."

"And is that your last word?" demanded the captain.

"My very last," replied the young man, turning to leave the cell.

"Curse you, then, for a spiritless hound—a milksop," muttered the former, bitterly; "a dolt, without the animal's instinct of self-preservation! Fortunately," he mentally added, "I have not trusted all my hopes in one vessel. Paulo will have no scruples."

Like many men in a similar position, the prisoner calculated badly. It was not upon the willingness of his agent to carry out his atrocious plan, but his success, that safety depended.

Harold left the prison with a heavy heart. His proud and sensitive nature revolted at the disgrace which threatened the name he bore. Young as he was, he knew the world too well to expect to escape its sneers. Bianca, too! How would the dishonor of his family affect her?

On his return to the house of Signor Benetti, he encountered the merchant, who perceived at a glance that something serious had occurred, for, as his guest accepted his proffered hand, he blushed deeply.

"No ill news?" he observed.

"The worst that can befall a man—disgrace."

The signor slowly repeated the word.

It was a relief to our hero to unburden his mind to one so qualified in every way to advise and console him. The Italian listened attentively to his story, and fully appreciated the candor and uprightness that induced the confession.

"It may be a *ruse*," he said, "on the part of the prisoner, to induce yourself and friend to withdraw the serious charge you have made against him, or at least abstain from pressing it. Drowning men, according to your English proverb, catch at straws; this may be one of them."

Harold shook his head despondingly.

"Come the worst," added the speaker, "the infamy cannot fall on you."

"You do not know England," replied our hero. "With all its love of wealth, its worship of the material, honor still reigns supreme. Sir Jasper is the head of the family—every member of it will share in the disgrace. If Riddle's tale proves true, I have nothing left but to abandon my country forever."

"Weakness," exclaimed the merchant, "weakness! Such an act would be little better than moral cowardice. Live down the stain. After all," he resumed, "the tale may be mere invention. I am inclined to pronounce it so."

His hearer might have been of the same opinion, had he not recollected certain visions of the night—the mysterious watchings of Mark Chambers—his menacing words—the tale of robbery and murder connected with the fate of his son.

"At least," he said, "I shall return to England to await the *dénouement*."

Signor Benetti, that same evening, remained to an unusually late hour in his counting-house occupied by affairs. All the clerks, with the exception of Pietro, had been dismissed. The guilty man, conscious of his treachery and ingratitude to one who for so many years had proved a generous employer, felt restless, and regarded the office dial uneasily.

The hand marked five minutes to eleven; another hour, Paulo and his companions would be at the gate.

"Pietro," said the merchant, suddenly raising his head from the desk, "how long have you been in my service?"

"Thirty years, signor.

"Have you anything to confess to me?"

The spy remained silent.

"I have been a liberal master to you," added Benetti.

"True, signor."

"Have you anything to confess to me?"

Still not a word.

"When you were ill," resumed the speaker, "dying, as they said, of the fever, "I sent you to my country house—tended you myself."

"True, signor."

"And you feel grateful?"

"Very grateful."

"Have you anything to confess to me?"

The wretched man hung his head.

"I can forgive much to repentance. You have five minutes to decide."

Neither the merchant nor his clerk spoke again. Each watched the monotonous ticking of the timepiece. The hour struck at last.

"Too late!" exclaimed Signor Benetti, calmly.

Pietro started from his seat. At the same instant a pair of young and vigorous arms secured him, and a gag was thrust into his mouth by Tom Mayfield, who had silently entered the counting-house on the first stroke of eleven, in company with his friend Harold.

Both were well armed.

How Signor Benetti became aware of the plot laid against his safety by the crafty head of the police, was one of those circumstances which can never be clearly explained; we can only suggest the means by reminding our readers of the various secret societies which, under Austrian oppression, were so numerous in Italy, the members of which were bound by the most solemn obligations to assist each other. Whatever source he derived his information from, the merchant relied upon it implicitly, and secured the co-operation of the young Englishmen to enable him to defeat it.

"I will ascertain whether the rest of the servants have retired," he observed, "before we lead him to my chamber."

Pietro looked imploringly at his master, but the gaze that met his was cold and pitiless.

In a few minutes his employer returned, and made a sign to the friends to follow him with their prisoner, who walked as if they were conducting him to the scaffold, instead of the luxuriously furnished room in which his employer generally slept.

His captors never spoke a word; one of them drew the rich silk cap which he took from the pillow upon his head, pulling it down to the brows; they next swathed him like a mummy in a number of clothes, and placed him on the bed, drawing the coverlet over.

Although no two persons could be more unlike than Signor Benetti and his clerk, there was one point of resemblance between them—both had gray hairs. As the faithless wretch lay quaking in mental agony upon the pillow, any one entering the chamber might easily have mistaken him for his master, especially after Harold had turned the lamp partially down.

Having accomplished their task, they left him to his meditations.

Despite his just cause of anger, the Italian was far too humane a man to contemplate the death of the spy. His object was to prevent him from giving any alarm; and, at the same time, frighten him severely. He knew the powerful influence that had been used to corrupt the fidelity of his servitor, and despised more than resented it.

Descending to the lower *salon* with his two companions, Benetti joined a party of friends, whom he had summoned as witnesses and assistants to his proceedings. Amongst them were the colonel, the English consul, and several of the wealthiest merchants, native and foreign, in Leghorn.

A few minutes before the appointed hour, they placed themselves in the courtyard, ready to admit Paulo and his brothers.

They were prepared to receive them.

To guard against the possibility of danger, as well as to prevent any unnecessary alarm, the doors leading to the apartments where Clara and Hannah slept were securely locked and barricaded, so that the lover and his friend felt perfectly easy on their account.

"What would they say to our adventures in Lowelstree?" whispered Tom. "They would read like a romance were we to write them."

A single knock was heard on the outward gate.

"Hush!" said Harold, "the assassins are at their post."

Both grasped the weapons in their belts, ready, if necessary, to give the agents of Signor Malvolio a warm reception.

The knock was repeated, and several of the party assembled in the courtyard cautiously opened the gate.

CHAPTER XLIV.

O, treacherous night!
Thou lend'st thy ready vail to every treason.
AARON HILL.

Neither Paulo nor his brothers were surprised at the deep obscurity which prevailed in the courtyard when they entered it. It was not to be supposed the treacherous clerk would bring a lamp with him. Anxious to secure them all three, the gentlemen waited till the last one had passed the threshold, when the gates were suddenly closed upon them, and, before they could offer the least resistance, *two* of the intruders were secured.

A succession of oaths and curses, accompanied by impotent struggles, followed, and there was a call for lights, which one of the party brought from the *salon*.

Signor Benetti looked around him. Paulo had escaped!

"He cannot have left the house," exclaimed our hero.

"Search the lower rooms!" cried several of the gentlemen.

"Follow me to my chamber, gentlemen," said the merchant; "he has directed his footsteps there."

He was right. The ruffian—determined, at least, to accomplish one part of his mission, and, in so doing, secure the good-will of the chief of the police—had bounded up the great staircase, and groped his way to the sleeping-room of the speaker; no very difficult task, seeing that he had long been in possession of a plan of the entire building.

Like most Italians, Paulo was exceedingly superstitious; and when his pursuers, headed by Benetti, burst into the chamber, he recoiled, paralyzed with terror—his ferocious courage gone. He had, as he believed, just driven his knife into the chest of the signor—yet there he stood, living and unharmed, before him.

Long ere he could recover from his astonishment, a dozen hands had grasped and securely bound him.

Taken thus—red-handed—the weapon still reeking with blood, it was useless for Paulo to deny his crime. In his eagerness, he had exceeded his instructions—the blow was fatal. Pietro had paid the penalty of his treachery to his employer with his life.

"Away with him to the bureau of the police," was the general cry.

The native merchants particularly urged this; their prisoners had long been the terror of the city, and they trusted the time had arrived to rid it of them forever.

Signor Malvolio never moved a muscle when his unsuccessful agent was brought before him. The fellow had failed, and his fate henceforth became a matter of profound indifference to him. With the most cordial expressions of sympathy, he warmly congratulated the intended victim on his escape, complimented him upon his presence of mind in taking the assassin in the very fact, and thanked the Englishmen and the consul for the assistance they had rendered.

"Have you any statement to make?" he added, turning suddenly to the prisoner.

The younger brothers regarded the elder one, who merely shrugged his shoulders; by which they understood that it was their cue to remain silent.

"You will appear in the morning, gentlemen," said the chief of the police, addressing the gentlemen, "that I may receive your depositions in a more regular form. As for these men, they are in sure hands."

He whispered a few words to the guard, who instantly removed them.

"The trial will be rather an interesting one," observed Harold to his host, as they were discussing the adventure of the night on their return home.

Signor Benetti smiled.

"I trust it will not be long before it takes place," continued the speaker, "as I am anxious to depart for England. Do you think my evidence will be necessary?"

"No."

"Yours and the consul's will suffice?"

"More than suffice," replied the merchant. "If I err not in my calculations," he added, looking at his watch, "the trial by this time is over."

His hearers naturally looked very much astonished at his words.

"And execution—probably at this very moment, whilst we are speaking of him—taking place."

"I thought Italian justice was proverbially slow," observed Colonel Mordaunt.

"Justice in Italy is slow," said the signor, gravely, "but fear is swift; her arm expeditious as her thought. "Think you," he added, lowering his voice, "that those who employed him—who bribed or terrified my clerk into admitting the assassins into my house—will give them a chance of betraying them? No! the fate of Paulo is as surely fixed as if fate itself had pronounced it. As for the brothers, they most probably were merely subordinate agents in the attempt; they may be brought to trial and condemned, but not the principal."

The prediction proved correct. The chief of the police, finding himself compromised by the failure and capture of the instrument he had selected, speedily decided on his doom. Armed with most despotic power, there were no difficulties in carrying it out; half a dozen sbirri were dispatched to his cell, and Paulo—to use an Italian expression—passed his evil quarter of an hour.

"Is it over?" demanded Malvolio, of one of the executioners.

"The fellow is dead enough," replied the man.

"Did he resist?"

"No, signor."

"How came that blow upon your face, then?"

"The Englishman, who was in the same cell, attempted to interfere," answered the subordinate.

"What Englishman?" exclaimed Malvolio, starting from his seat.

"The captain—the forger.'

"Fools! idiots!" roared the chief, in a paroxysm of fury—"to have permitted a witness of such a deed. How came he in the cell?"

"We found him there," replied the men, obsequiously.

The assertion, upon inquiry, proved true. Paulo, suspecting, perhaps, his danger, had bribed the head goaler to place him in the same dungeon with Riddle, thinking the presence of an Englishman would be a protection. He was mistaken; it caused the death of both.

The next morning it was given out that the notorious assassin had strangled his fellow-prisoner, and then anticipated justice by laying hands on his own life. The farce of an inquiry was soon over, and the bodies buried before half the inhabitants of Leghorn were aware of what had taken place.

"I am rejoiced on your account," said the merchant, when he imparted the intelligence to Harold. "The assertions of the captain may have been true; now, whether true or false, the secret lies buried with him."

Our hero did not feel so confident; he thought of Mark Chambers, and his nightly watching.

"Murder cannot be concealed," he observed; "it must out."

"An Englishman's idea; utter it to an Italian or a Spaniard, and he will laugh at you, for ten to one but his experience will contradict you."

"Do you believe the story of this double crime?"

"Not a word of it," replied the signor; "recollect our conversation of last night. I predicted the fate of Paulo: for reasons I cannot divine Riddle has shared it. The world is well freed from such men; let us speak of them no more."

From that day the merchant without the slightest attempt at concealment, pursued his design of realizing his immense fortune, and bought up every bill he could meet with upon London and Paris. His enemy, the chief of the police, had received too severe a check to interfere. He even went so far as to mortgage his house and furniture to a foreign firm, which lent itself readily to the transaction. So that by the time the Vectis arrived in port he was quite ready to embark with his wealth for England.

Of his pictures he took but one—the portrait of Bianca.

At the request of his old friend, Colonel Mordaunt, the commander of the Vectis had readily granted a passage for himself and friends. Once under the Bristish flag, Benetti felt himself safe. He had not gone on board a single hour too soon, for on the very morning the noble vessel was to sail, orders arrived from Milan to arrest him, and the chief of police, attended by a party of his men, rowed alongside.

The merchant, who was conversing with his friends upon deck, changed color when he recognized him.

"Go below," said the British officer, kindly; "he must not see you. Leave me to deal with him. But first, on your honor as a man, is the captain of the port in the boat with him?"

"On my honor as a man, he is not."

"Below," repeated the commander. "The fellow is not in uniform—I am not obliged to recognize him. What a pity," he added, looking round with a peculiar smile, "that we have no one on board who can speak Italian!"

The hint was not thrown away.

Although the vessel was anchored two miles, at least, from the mole, by legal fiction she was still within the port of Leghorn. Orders were given to raise anchor, and prepare for sea.

Signor Malvolio approached the sides of the floating leviathan, and asked to speak with the captain. As a matter of course, no notice was taken of his request, unless by three or four middies, who stood leaning over the gangway laughing at him.

He looked round to see if he could grasp a rope—not a line was within reach; he called again, shouting out his name and authority.

One of his men suggested that he ought to have come in uniform, or brought the port-captain off in the boat with him.

"What are these land lubbers a-jabbering about?" exclaimed the boatswain, who perfectly understood what was going on. "I shouldn't at all wonder if they got a dousing."

After such a hint, it would have been remarkable if they had not. A dozen buckets were let down into the sea from the opposite side of the Vectis, drawn up, passed round, and the contents sent over them. It all but swamped the boat.

"Well, if I didn't say so!" added the jolly tar, with a knowing smile, and at the same time giving his inexpressibles that hitch peculiar to sailors; "heave away, lads, ho-ye-ho."

The crew were still engaged in raising the anchor.

Malvolio, finding his authority ignored, and bitterly blaming his own stupidity in not having donned his uniform, as a last resource, rowed towards a Tuscan gun-brig, lying at a short distance, and proceeded on board. His name, and the influence he was known to exercise, easily induced one of the officers to return with him; but, by the time they reached the Vectis, the anchor was already raised, and the vessel slowly moving from its moorings.

The second lieutenant raised his cap and bowed most politely to the Tuscan lieutenant in the boat, who stood up, and requested to speak with the English commander.

"*Non intende*," shouted the English officer, who, *par parenthèse*, spoke Italian perfectly well.

The demand was repeated.

"*Inglese!*" cried the lieutenant again, using his hand as a speaking trumpet.

Like the shark that has followed some noble ship, or the vulture disappointed of its prey, the chief of the police reluctantly gave the order to pull to port. He saw that he was baffled, and only had to thank his own oversight and impetuosity that he had not succeeded in boarding the British vessel. Had he been in uniform, or accompanied, as he ought to have been, by the captain of the port, the commander of the Vectis could not have refused to have received him on board.

Whether he would have consented to give up his guest is quite another thing.

As the rocky island of Gorgona sank beneath the horizon, Harold and Tom descended to the cabin, where their late host was seated conversing calmly with Colonel Mordaunt and the captain. Both the young men warmly congratulated him.

"All danger is past!" exclaimed our hero, joyfully. "We are on the open sea now, under the flag of England. There is not a crowned tyrant in Europe but would pause before he ventured to demand you."

"And if he did demand him," observed the commander of the Vectis, "there is not a power in Europe, barring the Lords of the Admiralty, that would force me to give him up. That fellow's blunder," he added, "was a lucky thing, or I might have been hauled to an account."

"Thank you," said the merchant, shaking the hand of our hero. "How can I ever repay you?"

"Repay! You owe me nothing."

"The decision I came to," whispered Signor Benetti; "*the slave has broken his chain.*"

Harold started.

"I am the uncle of Bianca," added the speaker; an avowal which at once explained the interest he had taken in the young Englishman, and his possession of the fair Italian's portrait, which, at the earnest request of her lover, he had permitted him to hang in his own cabin.

As the voyage promises in every respect to be a prosperous one, we must leave Tom to the society of his devoted Clara, and his friend to the less satisfactory happiness of anticipating the meeting with Bianca, to return to those we left in England.

Mrs. Page, having let her first floor to a respectable lodger, a middle-aged woman, of whom we shall have something more to say, perhaps, anon, found time, in company with the exile's daughter, to make daily visits to Islington. It was not without difficulty they avoided the anxious inquiries of Telbin after his sister; the story of her having obtained an engagement in the country did not satisfy him. "Why did she not write?"

"Those dreadful rehearsals, I think they call them," replied the landlady.

The dwarf shook his head. Silenced but not convinced. As it ultimately turned out, it would have been much better to have told him the truth at once, and Bianca would have done so but for the caution of the physician.

Meanwhile, a singular change was operating on his constitution. The fever that had reduced him almost to the last stage of attenuation, had roused the dormant energies of nature; given a vigorous action to each muscle and sinew; the deposits, which in the human frame go to form the bones, had marvellously increased. In other words, the dwarf had grown.

He had been an inmate of the dairy about six weeks when he first made the discovery. The poor fellow—tired of being so much alone, and anxious to ascertain something decisive respecting Clara, quitted his bed with the resolution of dressing himself and returning to Princess street—could scarcely credit the evidence of his senses as he surveyed himself in the mirror; his trousers were at least two inches shorter than when he last drew them on, or he had gained so much in hight. He absolutely trembled with delight.

"A man!" he faltered. "I shall be a man!—no longer a thing for pity, to waste soft words or contempt its jests upon; a human being! able to resent insult; protect those I love; toil for my own living; earn the bread I eat—not owe it to affection, or compassion. I may taste the delights of friendship, for I can meet it on equal terms; and love," he added, in a tone so low, it sounded like the echo of a thought rather than its utterance.

"Love!" he repeated, sadly, "that, too, may dawn upon me; but not Bianca's, her heart is another's. I must forget that dream."

The feeling of joy was too strong for a cloud of regret to dim it; he longed to hear the discovery he had made confirmed—to be convinced that his senses were not the dupe of imagination; and, throwing open the door of his chamber, he called loudly for Mrs. Mayfield and the farmer.

"Bless me! if he is not up," said the latter.

"Do you perceive no change in me?" demanded Telbin, grasping his hand and looking eagerly into his face.

The old man smiled kindly.

"Am I dreaming?"

"Not if thee thinks thee art grown," replied the dame, "doctor said thee would, but forbid master and I to speak on it, for fear o' exciting and disappointin' thee. Thee beest taller by two good inches at least," she added.

"Aye! that he be," said her husband.

"But will it last? Shall I continue to grow?" exclaimed the youth, trembling with emotion.

"God only can answer thee that question," observed Mr. Mayfield, solemnly; "but doctor thinks thee will. It beant uncommon after fever like. Don't 'ee remember, dame, how old Matthew's son growed after his? For my part, I never thought he'd a left off. But thee must take exercise—walking and fresh air," he added; "thee hast been too much of a nest bird, doctor says."

This was true. The extreme sensitiveness of the dwarf, when old enough to be aware of his peculiarity, caused him to neglect the only means that might have remedied it. He fled from his fellow-creatures as something apart from them, and rarely ventured into the streets unless at night.

"True; air, exercise, the green fields, the woods and streams!" murmured Telbin—"all will one day be mine. How I have dreamt of them!"

From the date of this discovery the brother of Clara daily gathered strength. At first his walks were confined to the garden and fields at the back of the dairy; gradually he extended his excursions, and Mrs. Page and Bianca frequently accompanied him.

No one felt more delighted at the unexpected change than the worthy landlady. She spoke of it everywhere, but more particularly with her new lodger—her first floor, as she generally designated her—who declared it one of the most remarkable instances she had ever known. She had had a brother similarly afflicted. No wonder she became particular in her inquiries, and questioned her informant till she drew from her all she knew; led her to describe the character of Telbin—his feelings, his devoted love for his sister.

"You can't imagine how devotedly he loves her," said Mrs. Page. "Poor boy! I believe, at any instant, he would risk his life for her."

"And where is she?" demanded the first floor.

It was a fortunate circumstance, perhaps, that the landlady had pledged her word to say nothing respecting the abduction of Clara, or her enemies might have obtained a clue they were sufficiently cunning and ill-disposed to make use of.

"Heaven only knows," she replied. "I am out of my wits' end for excuses to her brother. We tell him she has taken an engagement in the country, but I feel certain he does not believe it."

"Indeed!"

"You have no idea how sensible he is."

Mrs. Mardon, the name of the first floor lodger, had obtained the information she wanted; and shortly afterwards left the house, under pretence of taking a walk as far as Chelsea to vist her friends. But the friend she visited was Mr. Parfit. For twenty years she had been housekeeper to the old money-lender, who, far from abandoning his designs upon the fortunes of his nephew and niece, pursued them more vigorously than ever. He had come to an understanding with his clerk, Pry; and, whether or no the trial took place, felt perfectly satisfied nothing would appear to compromise his name in the abduction of the poor old nurse. As for what the world might think, Mr. Parfit cared very little about that. It was quite welcome to its opinions as far as he was concerned.

"And so the imp is growing," said her master, with a grin, after listening to the account Mrs. Page had given him of Telbin. "I thought he was dying of fever."

"The doctors said so, sir."

"And he walks every day in the fields at the back of the dairy at Islington?"

"Morning and evening," replied the housekeeper; "but surely you would not harm him," added the woman, who, with all her subserviency, had some touch of humanity in her nature. She had listened to the description of the poor youth's sufferings so frequently, that gradually she felt interested in him.

"Harm him!" repeated the money-lender; "do you think I am mad? What good would it do me whilst his sister lives? Besides, what is it to you whether I harm him or not?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Return to your lodgings, worm yourself into Mrs. Page's confidence," continued her master; "learn all you can."

"Does she ever speak of me?"

"Frequently, sir."

"And not very favorably?"

"Not very," replied the housekeeper, with difficulty repressing a smile at the landlady's copious vocabulary of invectives.

"If she does so again, join her in her abuse of me."

"Oh, sir!"

"No hypocrisy, Mrs. Mardon," exclaimed Mr. Parfit, sharply; "you can easily do it, although you have eaten of my bread for twenty years. Do you imagine I am such a fool as to believe in human gratitude? Nothing of the kind. You only make yourself ridiculous in my eyes when you pretend to be more scrupulous than your betters. There, you may go."

The woman hinted something about money.

"Why, I gave you five pounds last week," exclaimed her employer.

"I paid three for the lodgings."

With a pang—for it invariably cost him one when he parted with money—Mr. Parfit counted three sovereigns into her hands, bade her be careful how she spent it, and saw her to the door of his chambers. Having dismissed her, he locked himself in, and sat down to reflect upon future proceedings.

"The chances are more than equal," he murmured, "that Clara will never return; the boy, then, is the only obstacle to the probable repayment of the fortune. Yes—yes, it is worth the risk. So much gone already, so much promised to quiet Pry. I shall be beggared if I fail. Fail," he repeated; "I shall not fail; fortune will not play me so sorry a trick twice. But I must be cautious, and choose my agents more discreetly than I did the last."

Opening a closet, the speaker drew forth a suit of clothes different both in color and fashion from those he generally wore, and having dressed himself added still further to his disguisement by a black wig and whiskers.

When his toilette was completed, he regarded himself for several minutes in the looking-glass.

"My own brother would not know me now," he thought. "Safe, quite safe."

As a further precaution, he waited till night had closed before quitting his chambers.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

RECREATIONS.—Let your recreations be manly, moderate, seasonable, and lawful; the use of recreation is to strengthen your labor and sweeten your rest. But there are some so rigid or so timorous, that they avoid all diversions, and dare not indulge lawful delights for fear of offending. These are hard tutors, if not tyrants to themselves; whilst they pretend to a mortified strictness, they are injurious to their own liberty and the liberality of their Maker.

FOR THE WARS.

BY ALICE CARY.

I cannot see th' sun in th' sky,
Nor see th' flowers in th' grass—not I,
But only the flag unfurling—
Only the flag with the stripes and stars,
For gone away to fight in the wars,
Is my dear darling.

If I had not told my love till th' day
I saw his regiment march away—
With thought to a tumult whirling,
I must have broken the ranks of th' men
And given my heart to the keeping then.
Of my dear darling.

If he lives, he will come and marry me!
If he falls in the battle-field, 'twill be
Death to traitors hurling—
And I'll wear no color of mourning hue,
But only the red and the white and blue,
For my dear darling.

A STRANGE ADVENTURE.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

In a recent conversation with a gentleman who had spent several of his earlier years on board a cruiser, he related the following singular and thrilling adventure:

"On one occasion a small party of us went ashore on an island in the South Pacific, for the triple purpose of searching for water, hunting for game, and general exploration. Our party gradually became separated, and in the course of two or three hours I found myself entirely alone, in eager pursuit of an animal, something between a goat and a deer in appearance, which had just vanished from my view over the summit of a rocky acclivity. The scenery around me was wild and romantic—rocks, trees, hollows, caves and chasms on the right and left, a steep, high ledge before me, and a dense jungle behind, through which I had just made my way. The strange animal I had seen had disappeared from the summit of the ledge in front, and I was hastening to follow it, by taking a course to the right, where the hill seemed to present fewer obstacles to my ascent. But I had by no means an easy task, and was often turned aside by here and there a chasm, gulley, or precipitous rock, so that at least a half hour was consumed in making an ascent which in a direct line was only a few hundred feet.

"I reached the summit of the ledge at last, however, and found there was still another before me, equally wild and as little accessible as the first; and I was debating with myself whether to go on or turn back, when I perceived the animal I was in quest of, quietly walk out from a clump of bushes on the top of the second elevation, and stare down at me with an appearance of confidence in its own security, and then as quietly walk away.

"'So,' muttered I, apostrophizing the animal, 'you think you are safe now, do you? Well, we shall see!'

"With this I set forward again, clambering over rocks, leaping narrow fissures, and now and then pulling myself up some steep earth-ascent by means of bushes growing here and there. I had much trouble in keeping my rifle safe from damage, and once I nearly lost my life. I had come to a fissure or chasm about five feet wide, running far away to the right and left, and opening down a dark pit into the very bowels of the earth. It would be perfectly safe to leap across it, I thought, and more especially as there were some bushes growing close to the opening on the other side, which I could catch hold of if necessary the moment of my feet striking the edge. Perhaps this apparent security against losing my balance made me less cautious than I otherwise should have been. At all events, I slightly stumbled as I leaped, instinctively threw my gun forward to save myself, struck on the very edge of the chasm, which gave way under me, caught the bushes with both hands, and found myself dangling over the awful abyss, upheld from certain destruction only by a frail support. The minute which I occupied in drawing myself up and getting a safe footing under me, was an age of horror, and then I sunk down, weak, trembling and exhausted, and fervently thanked God for my preservation.

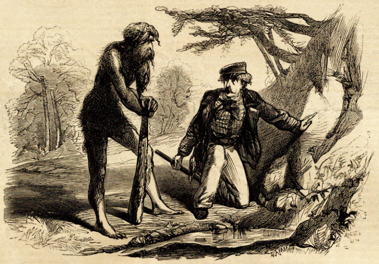
"It was at least a quarter of an hour before I thought myself able to stand, and when I did get up, my knees trembled so that I was obliged to take hold of the bushes for support. I picked up my rifle, and found to my great joy it had not been injured by the fall; and after waiting a few minutes longer to compose my nerves, I again set forward, though with much less confidence in my weak, human abilities.

"On finally reaching the height at which I aimed, I found it to be the most elevated point of the island. The scene was beautiful. It was near the middle of a warm, pleasant day, and all nature around me was in sweet repose. On two sides of me, at the distance of a couple of miles—the breadth of the island here being about four, and my position near the centre—I could see the mighty waters of the Pacific, slightly rolling under a gentle breeze near the shore and blending in the distance with a soft sky. Our vessel lay at the southern point, distant some four or five miles, and hidden by an intervening hill; but I could perceive its exact locality, and, by some peculiarity of the atmosphere, it appeared as if, with a little exertion, I might cast a stone to its very deck, though I knew this to be an optical illusion, and that, by the rough, perilous route I had come, it would take me some hours to go back to it. Southward were rocks, chasms, precipices, woods and jungles, with little rills trickling and flashing here and there like threads of silver; but northward the hill sloped down into a soft, quiet, beautiful valley, where occasional bright-hued flowers and blossoms made a pleasing contrast with the dark trunks and branches of gigantic trees, the long, brown, spiral stems of interlacing vines, and the differently shaded green of the surrounding, overshadowing, enclosing and fluttering leaves. A few birds were flitting from point to point and twittering forth their music of joy, and these were all the signs of life that I could see. My strange animal had completely disappeared, and it was quite probable I had beheld the last of him, though I doubted not there was game in the valley, which I now resolved to explore, if only to find a less fatiguing and perilous route back to the vessel.

"Accordingly, after a rest of a few minutes, I went slowly down the slope of the hill, keeping my eyes warily about me, but seeing nothing remarkable till about two-thirds of the descent had been made, when, directly at the lower base of a huge, overhanging rock, I espied a large spring of clear water. Now the spring itself was not remarkable, since one might have looked for it in just such a place; but it had evidently been deepened and rounded out by human hands, and was so nicely and artistically walled in by shells of different colors, as to produce a most pleasing and beautiful effect. Besides this, the drain had been rounded and shelled in like manner for a distance of twenty feet down the hill, where the tiny stream had an abrupt fall of a few feet into a natural channel, and was thence allowed to pursue its way undisturbed.

"Now who, in this wild place, had taken the trouble to collect these shells, and perform a work which, setting aside the skill required, must have cost the labor of days? Was the island inhabited? I had seen no other signs of such being the case. Had it been the fanciful work of some idle sailors? It was very strange and curious, to say the least, and for some time I stood gazing at it in wonder, and then feeling very thirsty, I leaned my rifle against the rock, and laid myself down to drink.

"I had nearly quenched my thirst, but was still drinking, looking down in the pool, when suddenly there was reflected in the water an apparition that made my hair stand and my blood run cold with horror. With a startled cry I sprang to my feet, and found myself confronted with something in human shape, but whether man or beast I could not at first determine.



"The object was about five feet six inches in hight, shaped like a man, entirely naked, but covered all over—face, limbs and body—with a natural growth of hair, varying in length from an inch to a couple of feet, the longest being about the head, face and breast. I could see it had human features, concealed under a shaggy, grizzly beard, and the hair of the head swept down in long, tangled masses, and partially shaded small black, wild, piercing eyes, which were now fixed upon me with an expression of blended wonder and ferocity. In its hands, which, with its hairy arms, resembled the paws of a bear, it held a formidable club, that it was slowly swinging to and fro, as if undetermined whether or not to crush in my skull with a single blow.

"Terrified almost out of my senses, I still had a glimmering idea that I should make instant exertions to rid myself of the monster, and with the thought I threw out my hands and grasped my rifle, but before I could bring it to a level, it was struck with so much violence as to bend the barrel, and it fell, lock downward, into the pool, a totally useless weapon. Quick as thought I next drew my knife, but in an instant this was sent flying with a whiz through the air, and the wrench from it almost dislocated my wrist. I was now unarmed in the presence of the monster, who, with a wild, horrid laugh, suddenly threw down his club, as if disdaining so unequal a combat, and flew at my throat. I grappled with him in self-defence, but though larger and heavier than he, I was only a mere child in his hands, and in a moment I was hurled to the earth with such violence as to deprive me of consciousness.

"When my senses returned, I found myself, bruised, bleeding and naked, lying on the ground near the spring, with the monster, dressed up in my clothes, strutting proudly to and fro, and jabbering and laughing to himself. The sight was a ludicrous one—for he had got on my trowsers wrong side out, and my jacket backside front, and was putting on the airs of a military coxcomb—but I was in no mood for laughing then. A sudden remembrance of all that had occurred, induced me to feign death, in the hope that he would go away and thus leave me a chance to escape. With my eyes closed, I watched him from under the lids for several minutes, and came to the conclusion that he was a human being, who had been so long upon the island as to have become wild—perhaps some young sailor put ashore here for punishment, or washed ashore here from some wreck—or perhaps an Indian blown hither in a canoe from some distant island, to which, from the loss of his little craft, he could never more return.

"At length he came and threw himself down beside me, and began to roll, pinch and rub me, uttering at the same time a low, moaning sound, as if regretting that I did not return to life. Presently he seemed to grow angry, and then suddenly buried his teeth in my arm. At this, in spite of myself, I gave a yell of pain, and the monster instantly sprung to his feet, and danced, capered, screamed and laughed for joy. Then quickly returning, he gathered me up with ease, swung me over his shoulder, and started for a thicket, but whether to preserve or destroy me I could not tell. At all events, I now struggled to free myself, and wildly shouted for help, though without expecting any response. To my unspeakable joy, however, my call was answered by some of my comrades. The monster also heard their voices, and stopped to listen.

"'Help! help! help!' I cried. 'Quick! quick! in the name of God!'

"There was a rustling and tramping sound, and then three of my comrades hove in sight at a distance of not more than fifty yards. The monster saw them, and, dropping me and uttering a howl of fury, bounded toward them. The next moment three rifles cracked together, and with a piercing yell he pitched headlong upon the earth, where for a short time he floundered like a dying fish, and then suddenly regained his feet and rushed furiously upon his enemies. Wounded, covered with blood, and dying though he was, he met the foremost, wrenched his gun from his hands, and might have brained him, had not the knife of the others at that moment reached his heart. Thus he died, and thus was I saved.

"A subsequent examination by our surgeon, disclosed the fact that this human monster was a white man; but beyond that, of course all was mere conjecture. We found the cave in which he slept, and evidences which led us to believe he subsisted on roots, berries, fruit, insects, reptiles, and sometimes fish and game. Like Alexander Selkirk, he was the only human inhabitant of the island, and

'Monarch of all he surveyed.'

We would have given much to have unvailed the mystery of his life—but it was not to be. I never think of him without a shudder, however, and a prayer of thanksgiving that I am still alive to tell this tale."

* * *

ANOTHER THIMBLEFUL.—A romantic youth, promenading in one of our fashionable streets, picked up a thimble. He stood awhile, meditating upon the probable beauty of the owner, when he pressed it to his lips, saying, "Oh! that it were the fair cheek of the wearer!" Just as he had finished, a stout elderly negress looked out of an upper window, and said, "Massa, jist please to bring dat fimble of mine in de entry—I jist drapt it."

* * *

LIVE virtuously, my lord, said Lady Russell, and you cannot die too soon, nor live too long.

THE WAY I KNOW THEM.

How instantly one can detect a lady, or a gentleman in a public conveyance, or any where else. How? I can scarcely tell you. In the first place there are refined and unrefined voices. The tone in which the simple word "thank you," is spoken, or the omission of it altogether, may decide the matter. We are aware that we are liable to be mistaken when we say this, but for all that, we re-assert it. We are aware we may be summoned to your tribunal to define our idea of a lady or a gentleman; but we shan't come. We shall only delibertely stick to our assertion, that we know them *instanter*, whenever and wherever we see them; and that we are neither guided in our decision by the presence, or absence, of fine clothes. There are certain things which a *true* lady, or gentleman never can do; not because they follow any arbitrary rules in such matters, but without any thought at all about it, and by an innate and instinctive refinement. Just as a cleanly person, without taking any special care, will pass through the streets without contracting a stain of defilement, while a person of opposite habits, plunges every where, and as if foreordained, into the mire. However, this is a touchy subject for discussion, because they who have the least legitimate claims to either title, are they whose backs are always up, and on the eternal defensive, lest some one should imply by look, word or gesture, that they are not ladies or gentlemen. Nothing could be more absurd than the tests to which the famous Lord Chesterfield subjects this question. And yet, to many he is considered this day, the indisputable oracle on such matters. We have seen his followers and disciples. Precious pieces of polished hypocrisy they are too!—with no more heart or soul than you could balance on the point of a needle, their greatest affliction in life being the intrusive presence of a questionable fitting coat or inexpressibles; while the artistic perfection of these garments, is with them, a mantle broad enough to cover any "*gentlemanly*" rascality of which the wearer may be guilty.

FANNY FERN.

* * *

NEVER RIDICULE CHILDREN.

There is so great a charm in the sportive play of fancy and wit that there is no danger of their being neglected and undervalued, or that the native talent for them will remain undeveloped; our chief solicitude must be to keep them, even in their wildest flights, still in subjection to duty and benevolence. We must not allow ourselves to be betrayed into an approving smile, at any effusion of wit and humor which are tinctured in the slightest degree by ill-nature. A child will watch the expression of our countenance, to see how far he may venture, and if he find that he has the power to amuse us in spite of ourselves, we have no longer any hold over him from respect, and he will go rioting on in his sallies until he is tired, and seek at every future opportunity to renew his triumph. Wit, undirected by benevolence, generally falls into personal satire—the keenest instrument of unkindness; it is so easy to laugh at the expense of our friends and neighbors—they furnish such ready materials for our wit, that all the moral forces require to be arrayed against the propensity, and its earliest indications checked. We may satirise error, but we must always teach by example to children, not only in what we say of others before them, but in our treatment of themselves. We should never use ridicule towards them, except when it is so evidently good-natured that its spirit cannot be mistaken; the agony which a sensitive child feels on being held up before others as an object of ridicule, even for a trifling error, a mistake, or a peculiarity, is not soon forgotten, nor easily forgiven. When we wish, therefore to excite contrition for a serious fault, ridicule should never be employed, as the feelings it raises are directly opposed to self-reproach.

* * *

ANCIENT GALLANTRY.

The respect and veneration paid to the fair sex formed an essential ingredient in chivalry. This, it is supposed, was derived from the customs of the primitive Germans, whose females are represented to have been very high-spirited and virtuous, and to have exercised considerable sway over the other sex. Whatever truth there may be in this statement, certain it is that a high species of gallantry forms the very spirit of modern chivalry; and, as a proof of this, we have only to refer to the classification of a knight's duty, *to fear God and love the ladies*, to perceive how necessary female adoration is to the very existence of this order. This principle of female adoration, so prominently displayed in every aspect of chivalry, extended its influence to the laws of the times; for we find James II., of Aragon, ordering in this manner—"We will that every man, whether knight or no, who shall be in company with a lady, pass safe and unmolested unless he be guilty of murder." And Louis II., Duke of Bourbon, instituting the order of the Golden Shield, enjoins his knights to honor above all, the ladies, and not permit any one to slander them; "because," adds he, "from them, after God, comes all the honor that man can acquire."

* * *

INSTRUCT your son well, or others will instruct him ill. No child goes altogether untaught. Send him to the school of wisdom, or he will go of himself to the rival academy, kept by the lady with the cap and bells. There is always teaching going on of some sort—just as in fields vegetation is never idle.

* * *

FORTUNE may often defeat the purposes of Virtue, yet Virtue in bearing affliction can never lose her prerogative.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ELLEN AND JACOB.—What is the use of your discussing the "What is a lady?" question, when you are each so confident that the other knows nothing about it? One thing is certain, and that is, that no lady or gentleman ever tells a disputant that he or she knows nothing about the question under discussion. In this country, there are two kinds of ladies: *first*, a woman whose nature is so excellent and who is so good-hearted and of such natural tact and refinement that she instinctively does the right thing in the right way, so far as *intention and kindliness of disposition* are concerned, is a lady—"a natural born lady," as she is generally called. *Secondly*, a woman who has been well cultivated in intellect and manners, and who, from a *sense of propriety*, avoids doing anything that would be considered improper, or that would give offence, is a lady in the society or conventional sense, although she may be a Lucretia Borgia at heart. In monarchical countries, every feminine member of the aristocracy is a lady by right of birth, although she may be a vulgar, drunken, profane wretch, disgusting alike in the eyes of noblemen and peasants, as some of them are.

BUN.—If a lady go to church with a gentleman, and, unexpected to both, a collection be taken, should the lady feel insulted if the gentleman offer her money for the purpose? Not at all; she can accept it, and refund it when next she sees him.

EDGEWATER.—If a young lady friend is sick, you certainly might call at the door of her own residence to inquire after her health, if you wish to do so; then, if you are invited in, you can go; we should say not otherwise.

CARLITE.—This correspondent, a Spaniard, pays us a compliment and asks us a question, both of which are out of the common course. The compliment is as follows: "To the LEDGER I owe a great deal for it taught me to read English. I was first attracted by the pictures, but, commencing one of the stories, I was soon deeply interested in it, and, with the aid of my dictionary, I was soon able to understand it perfectly. I am quite certain that if I had had nothing but my dry school books, I should never have been able to read English as well as I do." So much for the compliment. Now for the question. Our correspondent, having been slandered, wishes to know how to obtain redress. "In my country," he says, "if a person has any difficulty of this kind, he meets his enemy on equal terms and fights it out with sword or knife. But my American friends tell me I must not do this, but if one person tells lies of another, he goes to law and makes him pay for it. What do you advise?" Do neither. Some one, you say, has said that you have a jealous disposition. Well, in America, we do not consider such a remark worth minding. If your young lady loves you, she will not be frightened by such a charge, and if she does not, the sooner you know it the better. If you are seriously and injuriously slandered, you may resort to the law if you choose; but the method of redress by sword or knife is ridiculous, because it cannot possibly set you right. In America we do not generally tell lies of one another, and lies when told do not generally deceive, and if they do can generally be refuted by easily obtained testimony. The slanderer's severest punishment is the refutation of his slander.

X. X.—Young people who are engaged to be married should be very careful not to do anything at which their betrothed can reasonably take offence. And they should be generous in their conduct and scrupulous and delicate in their protection of each other's feelings. Therefore, you did wrong in going to a ball, with a lady friend, to which your affianced was not invited. Such conduct on your part exposed her to ill-natured gossip, and besides, there probably never was a woman whose heart would not be exceedingly pained by such an action on the part of her lover. How would you like to have *her* go to a ball, with some gentleman friend, to which you was not invited. In such matters between lovers, it is eminently true that what is sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander.

EUDORA.—"Is it a reasonable objection to my lover, on the part of my parents," asks Eudora, "that he is of a very diminutive stature? I am certain that his heart is as big as anybody's, and as *good*, too. They also say he is too young. I admit that he is rather young, but he is wise in experience. In fact, he is the smartest and best man that I ever saw. Why, then, should I give him up because he is small of stature?" The idea that your parents should object to your chosen lover on account of his diminutive stature strikes us as a novel thing; but as they may have strong prejudices against little people you would act judiciously to treat their wishes with tender respect. You acknowledge that your little lover is still quite young: why not then wait for him to *grow* into your parents' favor?

VOLUNTEER.—The private property of a soldier, we believe, cannot be seized to pay for damages wantonly done by him to private property. The amount of pay due him may be withheld for such a purpose, and that is all. The truth is, that our military code was framed with a view to the fact that private soldiers have no property. A large number of our volunteers now in the field are men of considerable wealth, but we venture to say, that not one of them was concerned in the house-burnings and furniture-breakings which have so disgraced the service. If they were, we can find no law authorizing the appropriation of their estates to make good the loss. A man who owns a house generally has too much respect for a house to destroy one wantonly.

R. Y.—We think that a young lady would have good reason to suppose that a man who had been intimate with her for three years, and during that period had shown a decided preference for her society and been her beau on all festive occasions, cherished a stronger affection for her than mere friendship, although he may have never directly declared such to be the case. And we also think that under such circumstances the young lady would have good cause for complaint and displeasure should he desert her for some one else; and that the "some one else" would do well to hesitate long before giving her confidence, much less her heart, to a man who had been guilty of such a protracted course of sneaking deception.

A. T.—Your vanity, aided by a lively imagination, is probably the cause of your disquietude in regard to the constant gossipping about you of the girls. It is not probable that "the girls" trouble themselves about you at all. We agree with you that such employment on their part would be "a mighty poor business." They could not very well make a worse disposition of their time. A young man who enjoys such a pleasant opinion of himself as you seem to do, and is so self-conscious of being the observed of all observers, might very well be the *laughing-stock*, not only of "the girls" but of the boys also.

DANVERS.—We believe that the highest medical authorities have come to the conclusion that hydrophobia is incurable, and that the only way the virus of a mad dog's bite can be prevented from taking effect on the system, is by a speedy cauterization and burning of the wound, and even that does not always save the victim.

JULIEN.—Thirteen hundred dollars a year ought to be amply sufficient to support a new-married couple in this city, not only with comfort, but with some degree of elegance. But they must not pay over $250 a year for rent. A small house, or else a part of a house, must content them.

HOMAN.—We are glad that you and your friends are so patriotic. It is natural that men who have fled from the oppression of tyrannical governments abroad, should take a deep interest in the welfare of our free, mild and hospitable government, and be willing to peril their lives in its defence. We wish you God-speed.

W. M.—When a man tells the truth to his sweetheart and she *will not* believe him, he must bear her lack of faith in his veracity with such equanimity as he can muster, or else close his engagement and his acquaintance with her.

LINCOLN.—Cavalry scouts can measure distances by counting their horses' steps.

A SCHOOL GIRL.—"As I find that the 'answers to correspondents' in the LEDGER are actually answered by you," writes this school girl, "I make bold to ask one or more questions on a grammatical subject. In the reading book which we use at school, there is a piece entitled 'Return of Columbus,' by W. H. Prescott. In the 6th verse is the difficulty. The verse reads thus: 'The admiral was too desirous of presenting himself before the sovereigns to protract his stay long at Palos. He took with him on his journey specimens of the multifarious products of the newly discovered regions. He was accompanied by several of the native islanders, arrayed in their simple barbaric costume, *and decorated, as he passed* through the principal cities, with collars, bracelets, and other ornaments of gold, rudely fashioned. He exhibited, also, considerable quantities of the same metal in dust or in crude masses, numerous vegetable exotics, possessed of aromatic or medicinal virtue, and several kinds of quadrupeds, unknown in Europe, and birds whose varieties of gaudy plumage gave a brilliant effect to the pageant.' Now the difficulty is in the word *decorated*, whether it means that *he* (Columbus) *was decorated*, or the islanders. In the one sense—'he was decorated'—*decorated* would be a verb; in the other—'islanders decorated'—*decorated* would be a participle. I have asked my teacher upon the subject, but I did not receive a satisfactory answer, and if you would but inform me as to what disposition to make of it, you will very much oblige me." It is plain that it was the *islanders* who were decorated. It is not to be supposed that Columbus would decorate *himself* with rudely fashioned collars, bracelets and other barbaric ornaments. Besides, the grammatical construction of the sentence, if closely considered, will reveal the same fact. If you transpose a member of the sentence, this will more clearly appear, thus, for instance: "As he passed through the principal cities, he was accompanied by several of the native islanders, arrayed in their simple barbaric costume, and decorated with collars, bracelets, and other ornaments of gold, rudely fashioned." The sentence, as you quote it, is obscure on the "*decorated*" point, except to persons who have become so familiar with the English language, that the *arrangement* of a sentence is of no consequence to them so far as *perpicacity* is concerned. The sentence is, however, *exactly right*, as the author has written it; and there would be no other mode of expressing his *precise idea*, except by a resort to circumlocation. "He was accompanied by several of the native islanders, arrayed in their simple barbaric costume.' So far, the facts stated are *general* and *continuous*. *All along his route* he was accompanied by the islanders, wearing their native costume; but it was only when he was *passing through the principal cities* that he had them put on their *decorations of bracelets, collars, &c.* Now, if you notice the exact sense of the sentence, as it appears in our transposition, you will observe that although we have made the "*decorated*" point clear, we have made it appear that Columbus was *accompanied* by his islanders *only when he was passing through the principal cities*, which is, of course, not at all the author's meaning. You are, by this time, probably ready to ask, Why did not Mr. Prescott say, "as *they* passed through the principal cities," and then the sentence would have been clear at first sight? The answer is, Because the writer was not describing the progress of the islanders, but that of Columbus; *he* was the central figure, around which the islanders and all the rest of his train were grouped as mere incidents; it was *he* who "passed through the principal cities," "*accompanied by several of the native islanders*," &c. We have taken pains to answer your question thus fully, because it pleased us very much to hear from a "school girl" who seems to take so deep an interest in those portions of her lessons which most pupils would pass over without thought or attention. The fact that you could not let such a point pass without explanation, goes to show that you are a close observer and a thorough student, and that you have those qualities of mind which are apt to lead to accomplished scholarship.

A POOR WIDOW asks, "Will you give me your advice how I ought to act, as I am truly in need of it. I am a poor widow, and obtain my living by needle work. About a year ago I purchased a sewing machine, the price of which was $40. I was to pay $25 down and $5 every month till the $40 was paid; with the understanding that if I could not use their machine on my work, they were to pay me back my money. I gave them $25 down; but upon trying their machine I found it *utterly useless;* upon stating so to them they sent their *own cart for it*, but I never could obtain *my money back*. I applied to one of our Courts, and got a decree against them; but the attorney I employed tells me that the parties carrying on the business are not worth a cent. God help the poor when they have to contend against the rich. I would give the name of the parties if required." We do not know what you can do, unless you have some friend who would take the matter in hand. It is too bad that a poor woman should be so outrageously treated.

CÆSAR.—As you have led the young lady to suppose that your attentions were preliminary to matrimony, we do not see how you can now discontinue them with honor. You should have thought of your "straitened circumstances," and the other matters you now plead in extenuation of your intended breaking off of your attentions, before you enticed the young lady into her present painful position. Still, without committing any breach of faith, or wounding in the slightest degree her self-respect, you may consistently explain to her and her parents, that your position does not warrant your undertaking, at present, the pecuniary liability of marriage. A little candor, *exhibited in time*, often saves a world of suspicion and annoyance.

C. C.—"I board at the house of my employer," writes C. C., "and am often obliged to be absent; my sister, by his invitation and my own, often makes me visits, during which my employer and his wife invite her to accompany them on a little trip, and pay her expenses. Should I offer, under such circumstances, to refund the expense?" Certainly not; although you should not allow its frequent recurrence, nor allow your sister to go unless the wife also accompanied them.

L. D.—India-rubber would not resist cannon-balls unless it were several feet thick, and even then it would be torn to pieces at last. A red-hot ball, too, would not fail to pierce it. There is only one thing that can be relied upon to render harmless the repeated strokes of cannon-balls, and that is a moist earthen bank twenty feet thick.

NEW YORK.—There is not one word in the Constitution of the United States upon the subject of drafting. It is an affair between the Governor of a State and the militia. Subjects of foreign powers cannot be drafted into the service of the United States. If they join our army, they must do it voluntarily.

AOUL.—We have repeatedly given our opinion on the subject of young ladies' giving their pictures to gentlemen to whom they are neither related nor engaged. No girl who respects herself and has been properly brought up will ever do so, and no man but a fool or a knave will ever request it of her.

W. E.—If a gentleman call on a lady, and she does not invite him to call again, can he do so without a breach of etiquette? That depends upon the friendliness of his first reception. If that is satisfactory to him, we see no objection to a second call, though he may not have been formally invited.

OLD TRION.—Nemesis (accent on first syllable) was a Greek goddess, supposed to be the instrument of the vengeance of the gods. We use the word in the sense of *the avenger*, and also to denote the necessary evil consequences of vice or folly. For example, the Nemesis of a drunken man is poverty, shame and the delirium tremens.

J. R. N.—A young lady who would in the evening accost a young man in the street who was walking with another young man, and take him off from his friend, and keep the latter waiting an hour in the street, is not a young lady whose "respects" you should value when sent to you.

WIDOW.—We really have no opinion as to whether it is proper or improper for a lady, when married a second time, to wear a bridal vail. That is an entirely new question to us, and we have no data on which to base an opinion.

J. C.—No young lady should solicit the company of any gentleman who has repeatedly declined her invitations; and no man who has done this has a right to feel aggrieved when the lady in question allows other young men to monopolize her attention to his exclusion.

H. B. S.—The West Point Military Academy graduates, on an average, forty cadets a year, all of whom are commissioned immediately. A large number enter the Academy every year who are compelled to leave in consequence of inability to keep up with their class.

SERGEANT.—A very good slow match is made of cotton rope, without any preparation whatever. Good cotton rope kept dry will burn about four and a half inches in an hour.

THOMBURY.—This correspondent wants to know, in case British upholsterers needed feathers, if the British government would recognize game chickens as belligerents. For a reply we refer Thombury to our friend Palmerston.

MADRID.—A bomb-proof arch must be three feet thick in solid masonry, and should be covered with four feet of well packed earth.

ALVIRA.—If your lover has been cold and formal, tell him that is the reason you did not answer his letter. It is best to be perfectly frank in such cases.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*